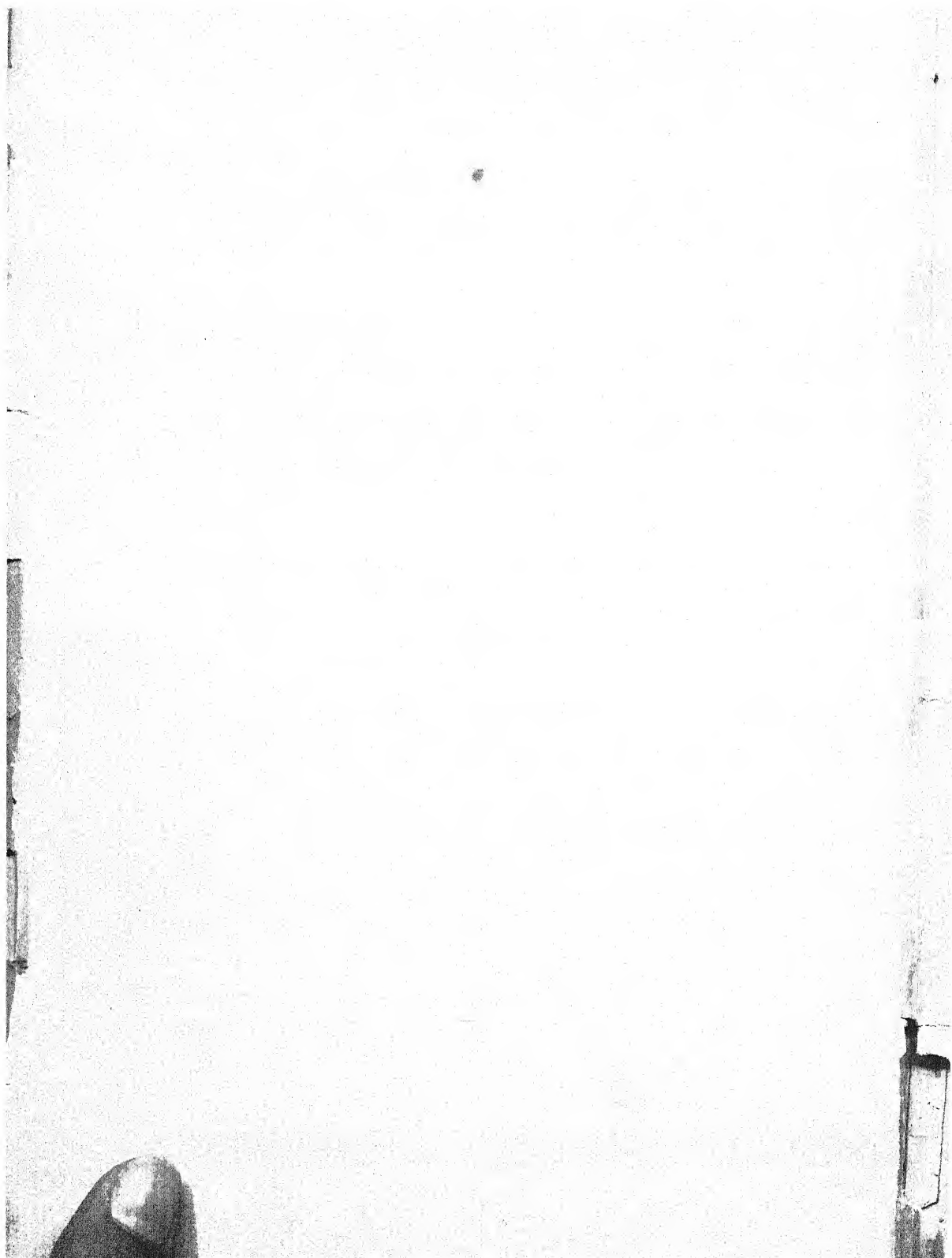


**INDO-ARYAN  
LITERATURE AND CULTURE  
[ ORIGINS ]**







Indo-Aryan .  
Literature And Culture  
(Origins)

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**Nagendranath Ghose, M.A., B.L.**

ADVOCATE, HIGH COURT, CALCUTTA.

AUTHOR OF THE TAGORE LAW PROFESSORSHIP  
LECTURES (1918) ON 'COMPARATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE  
LAW WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ORGANISATION  
AND LEGAL POSITION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE  
AUTHORITIES IN BRITISH INDIA'.

PROFESSOR AND DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF LAW  
OF THE DACCA UNIVERSITY.

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## PREFACE

Indo-Aryan Literature is overladen with unsolved enigmas, and Indo-Aryan Culture as evidenced in that Literature possesses features not to be met with anywhere else in the world.

The corner-stone of that culture, *Varnāśrama-dharma*, has been a standing puzzle. The extraordinarily heterogeneous composition of the Atharva Veda appears to repel all attempts at a rational explanation. The unrestrained glorification in the *Vrātya* Book of that Veda of the despised heretic and unbeliever of later days has been dismissed by scholars of repute as "too abstruse and absurd" a composition to admit of analysis and interpretation. Where, again, can one find such unprecedented mutilation of admittedly scriptural material as is seen in the Vedic Redactions? The *Vrātyastoma* ritual literature as a whole is a very museum of confusing contrarieties and inconsistencies. The literature of the *Brāhmaṇa* Books has struck unprejudiced (and even sympathetic) foreign observers as the very limiting point of perverted literary ingenuity; and yet this literature is seen to be the nidus out of which have apparently sprung into existence the finest crop of philosophical speculations and religious conceptions of undying vitality. The relation of the *Purāṇas* to the *Śrauta* literature is admittedly a problem of incalculable complexity and difficulty. The "inviolable *Sūta*", the "*brahmabandhu* Māgadha", the "*rājanyabandhus*" to whom *mahāśrotriya* *Brāhmaṇas* must go to be schooled in the *Vedānta* (crown and summit, that is to say, of the

Vedas) are enigmas, in appearance scarcely less untractable than the enigma of the Eka-Vrātya of the Atharva Veda.

So far not only has no organised attack been directed against this multitude of by no means unrelated riddles ; what attempts have been made to solve them in detail (casual and haphazard at best) have made no pretence whatever to following any reasonably scientific or rational method. Facile assumptions and, worse still, speculations motivated by prejudices covert and express, so far from clearing up the confusion, have tended only to aggravate it.

The author is convinced that the time has arrived for a planned endeavour to solve all these intertwined problems, and according to methods which will appeal to the scientifically minded. He is fully persuaded too that he himself has been able to lay hands on clues which must ultimately lead to their right solution. He realises nevertheless that relatively greater importance has at this stage of Indo-Aryan scholarship to be assigned to the question of method than to the immediate results to be achieved by its application.

The discriminating reader, he hopes, will not fail to notice that throughout his thesis, whilst he has appeared to be (as he could not well avoid being) concerned mainly with the right analysis, interpretation and co-ordination of his material, the author has been almost as keenly interested in the method which he thinks should be adopted in handling that material. What he has designated his "methodology" will be seen to run like a thread of wire through the entire thesis. The reader is distinctly apprised of it in the brief Introductory. It is conscientiously put into operation (though without pointed reference) in the five following Sections. He advisedly waited for the

completion of this preliminary course of practical demonstration before presenting a direct exposition of the method itself in Section VII ; and the procedure therein out-lined has been overtly followed in the remaining Sections. The application of the method to the "Draupadi Saga" in the concluding Section might usefully have been deferred until the author had received and profited by the views and opinions of competent critics upon the previous portions of the Book, the subject-matter of which proved more apt for the application of his method than the more deliberately and systematically perverted saga matter of the over-Brāhmaṇised extant Purāṇas. But life being short, the author has felt constrained to forgo that advantage.

The author has been persuaded to summarise here, in the briefest possible outline, the conclusions at which he has arrived.

He is entirely convinced : that the Indo-Aryan Literature-*cum*-Culture is not the single-lined metabolic evolution it is generally believed to be of a pure-blooded Aryan organism ; that on the other hand it is a synthetic product, whereof the material elements were in the main of Non-Aryan Eastern Vrātya origin ; that nevertheless it was the highly educated Aryan brain and the organising Aryan genius which played the determinative part in giving that product the shape and direction it is seen to have taken.

He is convinced that intensively and extensively the Aryan settlements were very much more educated than the bulk of the population in the Vrātya East ; that the ruling Vrātya Rājanyas nevertheless were a highly cultivated race, intellectually and otherwise far in advance even of the Aryan Brāhmaṇs (the most highly educated as well as the ruling element in the Vedic

Settlements), the rest of the Vrātya population being sunk in (not poverty, but) general ignorance and superstition.

Of the Indo-Aryan Literature taken as a whole, the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas, the author is further persuaded, were *basically* derived from purely Eastern Vrātya sources, the Trayī (Ṛk, Sāma and Yajur Vedas) having been (in a similar manner) *basically* of purely Vedic Aryan origination.

The synthesis of the two cultures, the author has endeavoured to show, was first brought about in Magadha ; that it was made possible and even easy of accomplishment owing to the *Vrātyastoma* Conversion ceremony ; that this was a political rather than a religious ceremony which the early Aryan settlers of the Panjab had evolved from the necessity in which they stood of constantly replenishing their man-power in the environment of struggle and strife in which they were cast ; that the *Vrātyastoma* ceremony which "Aryanised" the Eastern Vrātya peoples and countries was no mere passive bridge, for in material ways it conditioned that synthesis. Caste, for instance, which was unknown in the Vedic Aryan Settlements, got access into and foothold in the Aryan scheme of life through it. *Āśrama* too, the author has shown, being Upaniṣadic in origin, came from the Vrātya East.

And contrary to his original preconceptions, it was irresistibly borne in upon him that no people were freer from caste-consciousness and religious fanaticism than were the early Aryan Brāhmaṇs in whose plastic hands fittingly fell the task of starting and subsequently organising this synthetic culture, which for that reason fully deserves the designation of "Neo-Aryanism" and not "Neo-Non-Aryanism". Also, he desires it to be noted at this place,

that the one just mentioned has not been the only preconception and personal predilection which the author has found himself constrained to sacrifice under the suasive influence of data which came into his hands in the course of his investigations.

The author would incur grave risks of misrepresenting himself were he to attempt to compress the matter of Sections X-XII further than he has done in the Synopsis of Contents. He will simply recount his findings concerning the several stages in the evolution of the Indo-Aryan Literature in the very baldest outline.

The originally transmitted saga-stuff concerning Eastern Vṛātya royalties which later got transformed into the highly Brāhmaṇised extant written Purāṇas came first in order of time. The Ātharvaṇ Collection came next, being the first representative of the Literature of the Synthesis and having originated in the practical demand that arose in Vṛātya land for a Priests' *Vade Mecum* for Aryan Brāhmaṇs officiating for (*pro forma* Aryanised) Vṛātya *yajmānas*. As a repercussion thereof arose the movement for collecting and "Redacting" the orthodox Vedic ritualistic material.

The Ātharvaṇic Collection, he has shown, had unavoidably to be much more than what may be understood to belong to a Priests' Manual of the present day. In it are to be found the seeds of the Upaniṣads and of exegesis of the type which reared itself into such monstrous proportions in the Brāhmaṇa Books. Ātharvaṇic intrusions into the Trayī which the Redaction failed to keep out the author has endeavoured to indicate in Section XII. In the concluding Section he has tried his hand at the immensely more difficult task of restoring the saga-stuff, *brāhmaṇised* well-nigh beyond recognition, in the extant Mahābhārata.



In the course of developing his thesis, the author found opportunities which he utilised to follow the course of evolution of the Upaniṣad Vedānta (in broad outline necessarily) and to indicate its relation to the Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Vedānta *Darśanas*, and to Buddhism. The author will be sorry if the reader should miss his views on what he has designated the Redaction-Renascence stage in the evolution of Indo-Aryan Literature.

And the reader will discover that what have struck scholars and investigators as absurdities and insoluble puzzles find (almost without exception) their own natural place and position in the newly orientated world in which he has placed them.

Remaking a lost world is a strangely exhilarating experience in an author. It makes equal appeals upon his intellectual and artistic equipments, and not rarely he finds himself confronted by situations which prove irresistible in their humorous implications.

But the work nevertheless was not plain sailing all the way. There were occasions indeed when he found his path crossed by snags. His troubles over refractory Sanskrit texts were, in several instances, smoothed for him by Dr. S. K. De, Head of the Department of Sanskrit and Bengali of the Dacca University, and Mr. Guruprasanna Bhattacharya of the same Department. Professor Fück of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies and Professor S. N. Bose of the Department of Physics (of the same University) helped him to an understanding of Professor J. W. Hauer's recent book "*Der Vrātya*" written in German, a language with which the author is entirely unacquainted. Professor Bose, he takes this opportunity to acknowledge, could not possibly have taken more pains over Professor



## PREFACE

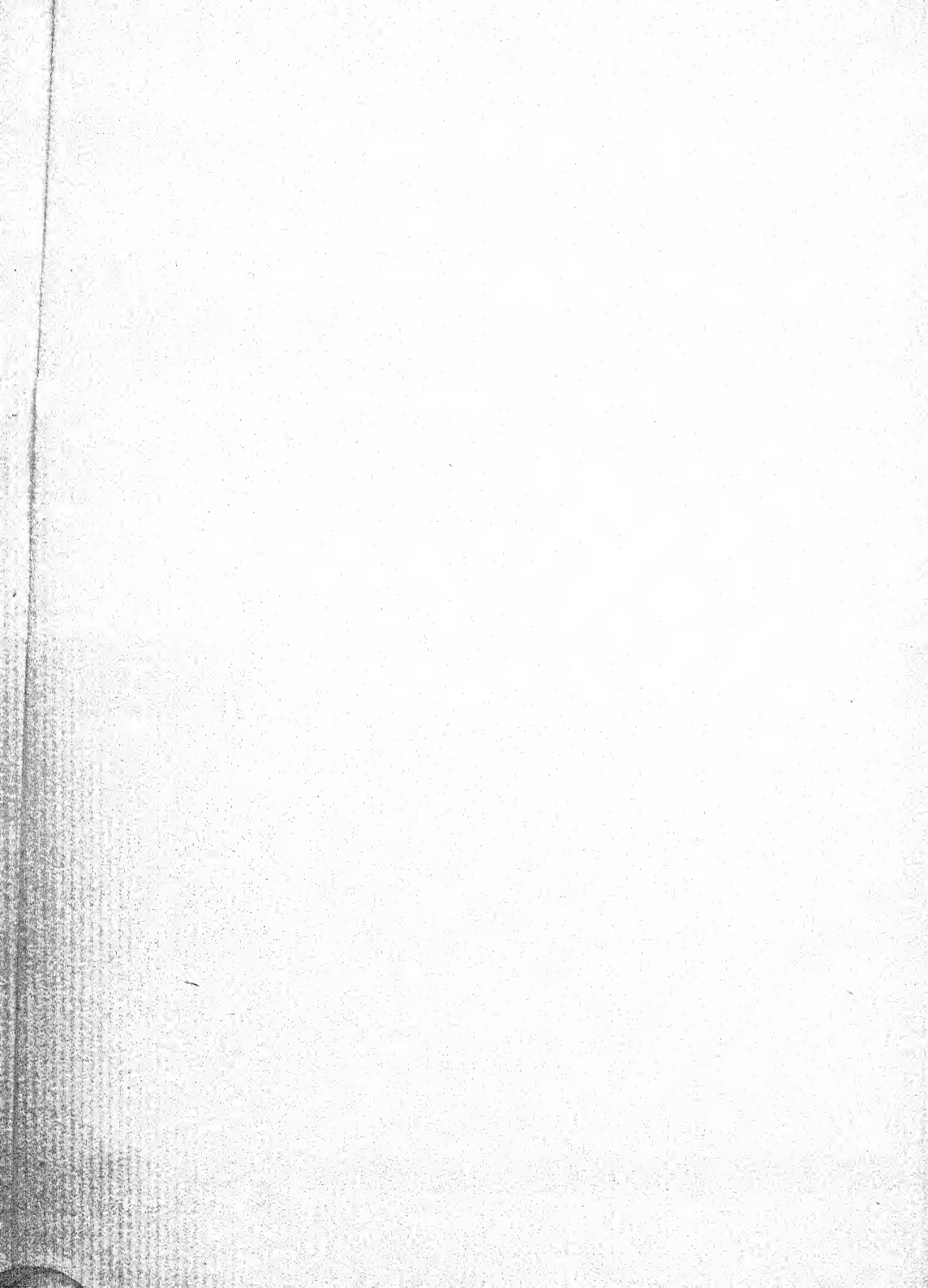
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Hauer's rather difficult book than he did for me, had he himself been writing this Book.

The author's trail and Professor J. W. Hauer's have lain so far apart that he did not find it possible either to use or to contest his views. He has in fact contested no views which did not actually cross his path. His task has been pre-eminently constructive (in a palaeontological sense, of course).

Ramna,  
DACCA.

N. N. GHOSE.



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## Synopsis of Contents.

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Pseudo-histories and the prejudices in which they have originated.

Chronological and historical arrangements of literary material by themselves furnish no clues to events which happened and forces and circumstances by which they were conditioned. History to be written should be the history of the interplay of these forces and circumstances, giving rising to institutions which are distinctively Indo-Aryan.

Problem akin to those confronting palaeontologists.

History to be recovered, broadly stated, history of *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma*.

The *Vrātyastoma* ritual ceremonials in the Brāhmaṇa literature and the Atharva Veda, viewed in the light of correlated material from the Purāṇas, point definitely to the essentially Eastern non-Vedic-Aryan origins of that institution.

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### § 2. The *Vrātyastomas*.

The four *Vrātyastomas* : (i) The Conversion *stoma*. Conversion was to Aryanism, not to specific castes which

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(ii) The Excommunicate-regeneration (*Ninditābakīrṇin*) *stoma*, also by origin pre-caste ceremony, Brāhmaṇ *ṛtvijas* officiating. (iii) and (iv) The *Sāvitrī-patita stomas*.

*Svarga-kūma* motive of the last two. Motive of the first two primarily secular. Virtual desuetude of these two forms the reason why "*svarga-kūma*" came to be the one expressed object of *Vrātyastomas* in the later Sūtra works.

Conversion *Vrātyastoma*, carried a stage back behind the Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa in the Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra : ritual performance colourable only, intention to be Aryanised overtly expressed being all that was necessary.

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Primitive Vedic Aryan communities' paramount need for keeping up their fighting strength by a constant supply of men of muscles originated this *stoma*. Imagined bar to admission of Non-Aryans unfounded. Language and complexion no bar to admission. Object and motive of this *stoma* political, not religious or social. Largest accession to the man-power of the Indo-Aryan world through this *stoma* came from the Non-Aryan *Vrātya* East.

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The Vṛātya world similarly exemplified by the Magadha Empire of Jarāsandha as portrayed in the same literature.

The Pṛthu-Vaiṇya Purāṇa legend analysed and interpreted. Replacement of Veṇa, the Aryan tribal chieftain, by the consecrated sovereign ruler of many peoples. Pṛthu, a territorial King who commands allegiance by divine right. Pṛthu's world same as Jarāsandha's.

Passing of the Brahman from the peacelessness of the Aryan world into the Peace and Dispensation of the Vṛātya Empire of the East. Abject Emperor-worship by the Brāhmaṇs in the New Dispensation. Hints of a Vṛātya-Brāhmaṇ Concordat in the legend.

Links between Pṛthu Vaiṇya of the Purāṇas and the Pṛthi-Vaiṇya of the Śrauta literature. Presumption that the Pṛthu of the Purāṇas is the Eka-Vṛātya of the Vṛātya Book of the Atharva Veda.

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( ii ) The Great *Vṛātyastoma-Ekaha-Sattra*. ( iii ) The Composition of the *Vṛātya* Book of the Atharva Veda.

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festive Royal ceremonies. Religious beliefs of the Vrātya Rājanyas. Their esoteric theosophy. (Attitude of the Rājanyas towards the superstitions of the common folk). The Brāhmaṇ emigrants' audience with the Eka-Vrātya. Political talks, specially as concerned the desirability of Aryan settlements coming within the Peace of his Empire and sharing its material benefits. The Eka-Vrātya in private life. Impression his personality makes upon the exiles. The latter's invitation to the Emperor with his people to join the Aryan communion by *Vrātyastoma*, as a step to claiming hegemony over the Aryan *viśas*. The Vrātya-Brāhmaṇ Concordat. The benefits to accrue therefrom to each. The Great Conversion-cum-Rājasūya Sattrā. Reflection thereof in the Paurāṇic account of Pṛthu's *Yajña*.

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§ 7. Concerning Methodology, or the Palaeontology of History.

Indo-Aryan literature having taken shape as literature (and not as history) long after the history of the age in which it was evolved had happened and been forgotten, clue to this history has to be sought, if at all, in tell-tale "fossils" found deposited in that literature. "Fossil" deposits of other ages (older or more recent), detectable chiefly by their "incongruity". Instances of tell-tale "incongruities". Aid to be derived from properly regulated "scientific imagination". Appraisal of self-disserving statements in Brāhmaṇ-made literature. Two instances thereof. Why the Rājanyas to whom copyright in original Upaniṣadic speculations is openly conceded in this literature must have been the converted Vrātya Rājanyas and not the Aryan Kṣatriyas of the *viśas*.

Contemporary "fossil" deposits in the Atharva Veda.

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Demons and Divinities of Vrātya Atharva land.

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Conversion of the (minor) Daiva Vrātyas for admission into the Aryan Pantheon. (Mahābhīṣeka-Rājasūya of Indra His transformation from a blustering bully to a voluptuary. Forcible entry of Rudra-Mahādeva into the Vedic Pantheon).

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§ 9 The *Sūta* and the *Māgadha*. The Fever-Charm *Sūkta*.

The Sūta-Māgadha "enigma".

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Effect of the Great Conversion *Vrātyasoma* in the Eka-Vrātya's land upon the disposition of castes. Aryan Brāhmaṇs absorbed into the Vrātya priestly caste, Aryan Rājanyas into the Vrātya Rājanya caste. Falling into line of other "classes" and castes.

Spread of the synthetic movement beyond Ātharvaṇic Vrātya land. Significance of the Purāṇas' attempt to frame a single genealogical tree for all ruling classes of every caste origin.

How the designations of the higher castes, like those of the higher Vrātya gods, came to be Aryanistic and not Vrātya.

Caste-consciousness deepens through entry into the caste-scheme of the Aryan Brāhmaṇs. Rapid displacement and degradation of the Sūta-Māgadhas. Evidence furnished by the Atharva Veda, regarded as (in the main)

a Priests' Manual for use by Brāhmaṇ officiating priests in Vṛātya land.

(AtharvaVeda, a Priests' Manual and more. Heterogeneity of its contents accounted for).

Resourcefulness of the Sūtas.

Progressive degradation of the Māgadha. The designation of *brahmabandhu*. Degrading part assigned to him in the Sūtra works (not in the PB) due to misinterpretation of the texts of Paryāya 2 of the Vṛātya Book, after the *Vṛātyastoma* ritual practices as originally conceived had fallen into desuetude and their original purposes forgotten and transformed.

Great historical value of the Baudhāyana *Vṛātyastoma* texts. The Gaupālāyana-Gandharvāyaṇa legend as evidence of the westward march of the Ātharvaṇic Neo-Aryanism to Kuru-Pāñchāla.

The Fever-charm Sūkta of the AV, a pure-bred Aryan charm brought by Ātharvaṇic Brāhmaṇ priests from their homeland and included in the Manual. Northern India, sanitarily speaking, not very greatly changed since. "Mass-emigration" theory of Vedic Aryan diffusion into the Eastern countries discounted by this amongst other evidence. The *oka* of the *takman*.

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§10. The Origin and Development of Indo-Aryan Literature. The "*Smṛti*" and "*Śruti*" Stages of that Literature. The Redaction-Renascence.

The Neo-Aryanism arising in Atharva land from the fusion of two opposing cultures and politics inundates Northern India and materially conditions the character of the entire Indo-Aryan literature.

The contents of this literature : the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas, the Upaniṣads, the Sūtras (Śrauta and Gṛhya) and the Purāṇas.

Three stages in the evolution of this literature : (i) a "smārta" stage ; (ii) an oral "śrauta" stage ; (iii) a written "śrauta" stage. External impetus required for transition from one to the next. Special measures called for to preserve the oral "śrauta" matter intact before it is given written form, which for all the precautions adopted can be only partially successful. Evaluation of purely linguistic and other like tests for determining the age of the matter of this literature.

First oral "Śrauta" Collection, the Atharva Veda. Though, from the point of view of its collectors, heterodox and lacking necessarily in canonicity, it did not also at any time arouse opposition or animosity. Reason therefor. Ātharvaṇic Collection why in the main *gr̥hya* and not *śrauta* in character, in the technical sense. Incompatibility between the Ātharvaṇic *gr̥hya* matter and the *gr̥hya* matter of the Gr̥hya Sūtras explained : they concerned two generically distinct households, one Ātharvaṇic (originally Vrātya) and the other Vedic Aryan. Why in general the character of the former *naimittika*, of the latter *nitya*.

Necessarily mixed composition of the Ātharvaṇ Collection : (i) Low-grade *naimittika gr̥hya* rites dominated by the spell and sorcery motive ; (ii) Some normal ceremonies, as concerning specially the *Śr̥ṇ* and *Rājākarmāṇi* ; (iii) Very superior Upaniṣadic theosophy ; (iv) Some purely Vedic-Aryan importations ; (v) Some propaganda for King and Brāhmaṇ ; (vi) Some poetical pieces.

All non-Aryan material, except the *Rājākarmāṇi* more or less Brāhmaṇised before inclusion in the oral Ātharvaṇic Collection. *Rājākarmāṇi* excessively Brāhmaṇised later for inclusion in the hieratic ritual scheme of the Yajur Vedas and the Brāhmaṇa literature. *Rājākarmāṇi*, all Vrātya in origin, enter the Vedic Aryan scheme of *yajñas* and *sattras* under Royal patronage, showing the widespread extension



of Vrātya political forms and institutions over Vedic-Aryan settlements.

Repercussion of the Ātharvaṇ Collection on the Aryan mind, chiefly in the "Middle Country" lying between the purely Aryan settlements and the purely Ātharvaṇ countries, creates a conservative demand for collection and preservation intact of the hieratic *mantras*, song-practices and sacred rituals of the Vedic Aryan settlements. "Redaction" of the Trayī. The "Redaction" demand converts the sacred Vedic Aryan ritual ceremonials from "*smṛta*" traditional practices to oral "*śrauta*" literature. Geographical location of the "Redaction" movement.

Violence done to the ritual material by the "Redaction". The Vāyu Purāṇa author's complaint in regard thereto.

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Commentators' attempt to confine the term "Purāṇa" as used in the Śrauta texts to analogous stuff contained in Brāhmaṇa Books, not tenable. Chhāndogya Āraṇyaka texts specifically correlating the Purāṇas (designated in that Āraṇyaka as the Fifth Veda) with the Atharva Veda, true to facts.

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*Ātharvaṇic* deposits

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(ii) In the Yajur Vedas : Mixed Mantra and Brāhmaṇa composition manner. Upaniṣadic interpolations. The Puruṣamedha Sūkta. The Royal rites (the last-mentioned inclusion testifying to the political as well as cultural subordination of the Madhyadeśa to *Ātharvaṇic* domination, demonstrating thereby the westward march of the Neo-Aryanism of Vrātya Atharva land). The Śatarudriya and other texts concerning Aryanised Vrātya deities.

(iii) In the Brāhmaṇa literature. Its highly sophisticated technique taken over from the Atharva Veda and pushed to extreme lengths.

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Karma-Vāda, central doctrine of *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma*. Caste *versus* class. Vedic *viśas* knew no castes ; later society is found riddled with castes.

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The Vedic *svarga* of oblations how came to be contemned by Upaniṣad Doctors as a paradise for fools. *Brahmacharya* and householdership transformed into *āśramas* (qualifying stages for the attainment of *Brahman*) by the Upaniṣads. The Brahmachārin Sūkta of the Atharva Veda.

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Kuru and Pāñchāla not original Vedic-Aryan *viś*-centres. Interpretation of the Videgha Mādhava legend: Vedic Aryans neither reclaimed nor conquered the Middle Country, but scattered colonies of them came and settled amongst Vṛātyas by whom it was populated.

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temporaneously almost with the conferences on Upaniṣad learning held in the Court of Janaka at which Yājñavalkya, reputed collector of the Vājasaneyī Yajur texts, wins distinction. (Avid pursuit by Brāhmaṇs of Upaniṣadic learning and its wide dissemination amongst them, a most active phase of the Redaction-Renascence).

Saga opens at a later age upon this venue, when the Vṛṣṇi-Yādava Aryan clan-confederacy led by Kṛṣṇa is found at death-grips with the territorial annexationistic Imperialism of Jarāsandha, King of Magadha and suzerain Emperor of the East and the Middle East. Immediate and ultimate political aims of the opposing leaders.

Kuru-Pāñchāla not at this date completely Brāhmaṇised, though the Mahābhārata composed long afterwards assumes it was. Consequent only partially completed Brāhmaṇisation of the materials of the Saga as handed down by oral tradition. Resulting "incongruities".

Death of the reigning Kuru King without issue. Royal legitimist motive for procuring issue by *nīyoga*. Other motives besides and instrument chosen therefor, as recited in the Epic, demonstrably fabricated (Vyāsa, Vaśiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra and Paraśurāma of the Purāṇas cannot be historical personages). *Nīyoga* not an Aryan practice, but casually found in Vrātya countries, and proved to have been a custom of the Royal House of Kuru. (Value to be attached to the *Smṛti* lists of marriages and sonships).

The *Kṣetraja* and *Kāuṛṇa* procreation of Pāṇḍu's sons and of Karna nevertheless demonstrably fabrications. Probable origin of the Kuru-Pāṇḍava quarrel. Part possibly played by Kṛṣṇa in it.

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The five-husband-marriage of Draupadī to the five Pāṇḍavas, original saga-stuff. The marriage presumably a privately negotiated political marriage, very probably arranged by Kṛṣṇa's exertions who by that means sought to align the Kurus and Pāñchālas on the side of the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas against Jarāsandha.

Bhīma's love-episode with Hidimbā. The Hidimba-Baka-Rākṣasa myth, probably no part of original saga.

Second Pāṇḍava political marriage contrived by Kṛṣṇa, the Arjun-Sūbhadrā runaway match. Basic historicity of most of what is related of Kṛṣṇa, his kith and of his people, barring palpable exaggerations and fabrications.

Kuru-Pāṇḍava truce. The Pāṇḍavas at Indraprastha.

Yudhiṣṭhira's natural hankering for a Rājasūya. Kṛṣṇa's advice to put Jarāsandha out of the way. (Transformation of the *nitya* consecration ceremony for Kings of the Atharva Veda, into a *naimittika* celebration of the attainment of suzerainty by a Rāja-Chakravartin of Paurāṇic times, traced).

Jarāsandha, a worthy prince but a determined Imperialist, misunderstood even by Kṛṣṇa. Foundations of the historic Maurya Empire of Magadha probably laid by him. His chivalrous end removes the only equal adversary of Kṛṣṇa from the field.

The Rājasūya fiasco. Yudhiṣṭhira inveigled and entrapped. The Great Dice-game Episode, genuine saga in the main.

Draupadī in the Assembly Hall of the Kurus. Her demand of "the law". How her overpowering personality reacts, first, on *prājña-sammata* Vikarna, then on Dhṛtarāṣṭra and finally on foul-tongued, evil-souled Karṇa. The miracle of Draupadī's moral victory.

The Paṇḍavas' *ajñātavāsa* in the Court of Virāṭa. The blood-drinking oath of Bhīma and the *venī-saṃhāra* oath of Draupadī, whether parts of the original saga.

Depletion of Indo-Aryan chivalry on the field of Kurukṣetra followed by the self-exterminating internecine feud amongst the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas.

All-round disillusionment, and tragic end of Kṛṣṇa's intensely active life.

Kṛṣṇa's ultimate political aim (the spreading and deep-rooting of *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma*) realised through his deification not long after his death. His dream of a single empire ruled by *dharma* paradoxically realised by a successor of Jarāsandha of the Buddhist faith. Where Jarāsandha saw further than Kṛṣṇa.

The Abhimanyu war-episode, genuine saga.

The Geeta.

Barring Vaiṣṇavite and other palpable exaggerations, Kṛṣṇa and everything appertaining to him as related in the Mahābhārata belonged to both history and saga.

Double-star world of the Mahābhārata. Kṛṣṇa-Mādhava the more forceful luminary, a third at least equally forceful, Jarāsandha, having been removed from the field before Kṛṣṇa-Draupadī found herself in it.

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(a) Pañchavimśa Brāhmaṇa texts.

(b) Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa texts.

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§ 2. *Vṛātyastoma* texts from the Śrauta Sūtras :

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§ 4. Videgha Mādhava Legend (Śatap. Br).

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§ 5. Some Reflections on "Mohenjo-daro and the

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# INDO-ARYAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE : AN ENQUIRY INTO ORIGINS

## Section I.

### Introductory

The Indo-Aryan has left an astonishing quantity of written records which reflect in various ways and with varying degrees of fidelity and fulness the civilization and culture which were his, at different places and in different periods of time, during that historically long age of which the earliest event was the settlement of the Vedic Aryans on the banks of the Indus river, and which goes down at the other terminus to the period of composition of the earliest extant Purāṇas. Excepting some insignificant portions of this last-named literature which purport to chronicle some relatively very recent events having no bearing at all on the question of origins, no part of this record pretends or professes to be written history in the proper sense of the expression. Matter possessing historical significance abounds in this record. But all this wealth of written material must remain unutilised and unexploited, for the purpose of writing scientific history at least, so long as it is not found possible to allocate them in their proper places in a reliable chronological and geographical frame-work, and so long, further, as the march of events which fell out during this long stretch of time (over an area, too, of continental dimensions) remains a matter of purely personal conjecture unrelated altogether to data of demonstrable historicity.



So far, the efforts of students of this literature have been virtually confined to providing this chronological and historical frame-work, a most necessary and important preliminary step; and the progress made has on the whole been satisfactory. But in the absence of knowledge or even a dependable working hypothesis, scientifically related to established factual data concerning the other dimension mentioned, namely, the progress of events, the assigning of different fragments of this literature to different dates and to different geographical areas has not only not helped in producing history, but has on the other hand given birth to surmises and fancies of the most questionable scientific value. These pseudo-histories would be found on analysis to be little more than vehicles of personal and racial prejudice. So far from helping, they have, by corrupting and clouding the points of view of younger generations of investigators, served even to retard the reconstruction of real scientific history.

The two basic prejudices out of which most of this pseudo-history appears to have grown are: firstly, the Aryan bias; and, secondly, the somewhat melodramatic assumption of the Brāhmaṇ as the villain of the piece, to whose ingrained selfishness and capacity for exploitation and intrigue must be attributed every departure on the part of a civilization Aryan in origin and Aryan in trend from the straight-forward Aryan course.

This facile pseudo-history becomes all the more dangerous and inimical to the growth of scientific history when it professes expressly to dissociate itself from these prejudices. It then takes the form of pushing the original Vedic Aryan apple-cart from the banks of the Indus up and down all over the chronological and geographical frame-work previously mentioned along loci marked out

in that frame-work; and it is nonetheless a mechanical picture because it assumes a somewhat biological form. According to it, the original living cellular unit, the Vedic Aryan *viś* (विश), drawing sustenance from the hospitable environments of India proliferates and spreads and shoots out colonies and sub-colonies in all directions, with modifications, no doubt, due to local accretions and local impacts, but maintaining through it all a certain Aryan virility until deterioration sets in owing to enervating climatic conditions which make it increasingly prone to fall in with the evil ways of the Non-Aryans amongst whom finally it gets anchored and rooted. In this picture, the Aryan bias appears in a highly sublimated form, and the Brāhman *deus ex machina* is altogether excluded.

I have never been able to persuade myself (in view of the extreme complexity of the material from literature that has to be put into it) that any Indo-Aryan history which seeks to trace the whole movement ultimately from a single vegetative source and to explain it all in terms of the evolution and involution of the same original stock of energy can really represent history as it happened.

The chronological and geographical frame-work has after all a conceptual existence only; and unless it is viewed as the arena upon which forces moving from different angles meet and mingle and fight to a finish, or (as more often happens) to a standstill, the issue of which is a concordat or compromise, it operates not to help but to retard the making of true history. The renovator of unwritten history, more often than not, has to be prepared to explain institutions and cultures by tracing them to the clash, conflict and commingling of many many forces, which alone can be supposed initially to be able to account for the extreme complexity which is seen to characterise them as a rule.

But who will say what these forces were? Where are the witnesses? Dead and gone with never a trace left of the strange things they heard about or the stirring events they saw happening before their eyes.

Emulating the example of workers similarly circumstanced in the allied field of geology, I have for some time past been engaged in the highly interesting occupation of collecting from this literature fossil data which may be expected to throw light as well upon the origins as upon the progress of events, and the directions the forces have taken which have produced the institutions under investigation. I am convinced that without resort to methods akin to those pursued by the palaeontologist, really scientific reconstruction of lost Indo-Aryan history is impossible.

Not much study of Indo-Aryan literature is needed to discover that what makes out Indo-Aryan civilization as peculiar and distinctive is *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma*; and that the Vedic Aryan settlers in the Punjab knew nothing of it, so that the institution must have come into being later. This was brought home to me by simply reading the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* Epics alone. From the same reading I was also convinced that the *varṇa-āśrama* scheme of life, at the time the Epics were written, still stood in need of intensive propaganda to be inculcated amongst the masses; that the movement was still, so to speak, in the dynamic proselytizing stage and had not yet settled down into the rigid hide-bound exclusive institution which it came to be, and that too not until long afterwards.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> My reflections on the *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma* based on the reading of the Epics, with occasional forays into the other *Purāṇas*, and impressions, cursorily gathered, of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Darśana* literature are recorded in an essay which appeared in one of the *Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes*. The essay is styled "The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*: A Sociological Study". Vol. III, pp. 361-404.



I had already begun to suspect that the potentiality for producing this remarkable institution did not exist in the primitive Vedic Aryan *viś* of the Punjab, but that the institution drew its main materials and sustenance from quite another type of society located far east-ward. I casually hinted at what was passing in my mind in this connection at a University Extension Lecture delivered in Dacca and published in the *Dacca University Magazine* of 1927. But I did not feel justified in drawing or presenting definite conclusions until I had to my own satisfaction gone over all the available data that are to be found in the literature relevant to the enquiry. Starting from Muir's very useful and satisfactory pioneer collection of textual material I found myself compelled to extend my researches into the Purāṇas and the Upaniṣads, on the one hand, and to the Saṃhitās of the Vedas, their Brāhmaṇas, and the Sūtra literature, on the other, collecting fossils all the way as I went. But it was not until I had succeeded in recovering what I believe to be the key to the *Vṛātyastoma* ritual ceremonies (as depicted in the Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa of the Sama Veda, and in the Śrauta-Sūtras) from the Vrātya Book (Book XV) of the Atharva Veda, and had found the key also to that Book and to the Atharva Veda as a whole (from the innumerable points of communication and contact, which the world of the Atharva Veda appeared to present with the world of the Epics and Purāṇas) that I felt justified in attempting to co-ordinate my materials and my conclusions in a presentable form. And this is what I am proposing to do in the following pages.

I shall begin my quasi-palaeontological examination of materials with the *Vṛātyastomas*.

## Section II.

### The *Vrātyastomas*.

There were clearly more than one *stoma* bearing the general designation of *Vrātyastoma*. Different *stoma* rituals going by that same name were available for use in apparently generically distinct situations. There were four of them, as clearly appears from the *Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*.

1. The one intended for taking into the Vedic Aryan communion peoples who by birth and lineage were outside it; PB XVII. I to 17.<sup>2</sup> It was a "conversion" ceremony. For though the *Brāhmaṇa* expressly states the object of the *stoma* to be the "attainment of prosperity," *Lāṭyāyana*, the *Sūtra* writer, who confines his treatment of the subject exclusively to this one form, describes the result as: *ब्राह्म्यस्तोमैरिष्टा त्रैविद्यवृत्तिं समाप्तिष्येयुः*; that is, the ceremony transformed the subjects into *dvijas*, not into *dvijas* of this or that caste. (*Lāṭyā*. VIII.6.29). The *stoma*, it thus follows, is a relic from times when caste as such had not developed within the Vedic Aryan community. It is reminiscent of times when not only was there no exclusionary obsession such as marked the fully developed caste-consciousness of later ages, but when the Vedic Aryan tribes were actually anxious to swell their ranks anyhow, by the absorption even of gentry whose habits were notoriously such that they would not admit of bare mention even without abhorrence, PB XVII. 9. I can discover no grounds whatever for Bloomfield's assumption that the rite made it possible "for an unholy half-savage community to become *Brāhmaṇs*".

<sup>2</sup> I had Dr. Caland's recently published Translation of the *Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* (1981) before me all the time I was engaged in preparing this work.

When this conversion ceremony came to be recorded in the Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, caste had fully matured and *yajñic* practices had proliferated into unmeaning ritualism of considerable complexity. The Brāhmaṇ priesthood had already taken control of from the largest to the smallest activities and interests of the people belonging to the community. The question arises, to what extent do the ritualistic practices recorded reproduce those of the pre-caste Aryans?

The *stoma*, in the shape it assumes in the Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, bears marks of sophistication in many directions due to theological reasoning of the usual kind. But I find it hard to infer even from PB XVII.1.17 that Brāhmaṇ priests officiated as *ṛtvijas*. There is a similar provision for giving *dakṣiṇās* in another ceremony of a similar standing, namely, the Śyena-Yajña of the Vrātinās described in the Saṁvimsa Brāhmaṇa, III. 8 (iv. 2). 23. But it seems quite clear from Lāṭyāyana's treatment of the matter that the Brāhmaṇs did not officiate; for not only are the *ṛtvijas* to be all selected from the *anūchāna* (enlightened, learned) sons of the Vrātinās, the kine to be given as *dakṣiṇā* may be काणाः खोराः खञ्जाः कुञ्जाः कुटाः भस्मशृङ्गाः वण्डाः ! Lāṭyā. Ś. S. VIII. 5.16. The "equipments" of the Vrātinā *ṛtvig* bear a close family resemblance to the "equipments" of the Vrātya *grihapati*: the turban, the goad, the vehicle (*vipatha*) etc. (PB XVII. 14), and of those of the other Vrātyas of his following; (PB XVII. 15). All these equipments which Lāṭyāyana designates as the ब्रात्यघनाः (VIII.6. 28) are to be given away after the conclusion of the ceremony, so that the sins of heresy of the converted Vrātya may pass with the cast-off equipments to the receivers thereof. Taking of *dakṣiṇās* for performing expiatory ceremonies on behalf of *yajmāns* without doubt originally signified a similar transfer of sin to the receivers of the *dakṣiṇās*. The Brāhmaṇs had indeed

to persuade themselves that they were themselves gods and that the *dakṣiṇās* were sacrifices offered to them as gods before they felt safe from the effects of this kind of sin-transfer. But it was one thing to take over sins with which one is familiar and quite another to take over strange and unknown sins. This squeamishness in regard to the sins of heretics certainly lingered in the case of the Śyena-Yajña, and would naturally do so also in the case of this *Vrātyastoma*. The texts of the PB XVII however do not appear to be decisive as to whether it did or not. But the description of the conversion *stoma* as given in the Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, presently to be considered, is decisive that originally the Brāhman gave this ceremony the widest berth and left the whole proceeding to be ordered by the intending converts themselves in whatever way the spirit moved them.

At the time the *stoma* got recorded in the PB, it is possible that the ceremony for practical purposes had not become obsolete; for if it had, the motive for propping it up by the mythology of the first text would have been wanting. This text professes to state how the ceremony originated amongst the gods. The mythology was probably called for to give canonical sanction to a practice already becoming suspect. By the time, however, that the Sūtra writers came to write on it, this *stoma* had undoubtedly ceased to be a living practice, for from the notes left by Lātyāyana, it is perfectly clear that these doctors between them could not make out what exactly were the things which the articles mentioned as the equipments of the Vrātyas actually stood for. (Lātyā. VIII. 6).

II. The second *Vrātyastoma* was meant for re-initiating those who "being base and censured lead a Vrātya life." The language signifies "excommunication" (not "out-casting"), though caste had already firmly established



itself when the *Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* was making a digest of these and other ritual practices, thus indicating that this ceremony too had come into existence in pre-caste days. It is very likely indeed that the Conversion *stoma* was an adaptation of this second ceremony modified to suit. This ritual must have been performed by *Brāhmaṇa ṛtvijas* : that indeed seems to be taken for granted in the *Brāhmaṇa* and in the *Sūtra* books.

III. The third *Vrātyastoma* was admissible for initiating young persons born of Aryan lineage who had for some reason or other missed their initiation at the right time.

IV. The fourth *Vrātyastoma* was prescribed for people similar to the subjects of the third *stoma* but who in addition had continued in the unregenerate state till beyond their age of procreation.

The subjects of the third and fourth ceremonies could hardly have been regarded with the aversion in which the excommunicate must have been held. *स्वर्गकाम* would just hit off the object to be subserved by performing these ceremonies. The performance of the other two forms would no doubt in the long run achieve for their subjects the same very desirable end, but the immediate purpose of these two *stomas* was obviously secular, and this text of the *Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* did not probably miss the mark altogether when it described the object of the Conversion *stoma* in terms of "prosperity" in general, for the Vedic *svarga* is a heaven of prosperity unalloyed by evil. It is thus easy to understand why in later times, when the "conversion" and "regeneration" motives became weak and finally disappeared<sup>3</sup>, the *Sūtra* writers

<sup>3</sup> I state later my reasons for supposing that the two first *stomas* had fallen into desuetude when the *Sūtra* writers came to write upon the *Vrātyastomas*. Their writings consequently show not merely lack of understanding of the differences between one *stoma* and another, A2.

ceased from assigning for the performance of the *Vrātyastomas* any other reason than the all-sufficient one, that is, the attainment of heaven.

It is noteworthy however, that even in a fairly early Sūtra work, the Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra (XX.5), the distinctions previously stressed between the several *Vrātyastomas* and their treatment as a class apart amongst the ritual practices have been showing signs of being slurred over. The *Vrātyastomas* occur in the same *Kandikā* lumped up in close juxtaposition with the three वाचः स्तोमाः leading in the van and the आदित्यानाम् प्रयति and the अभिभू (whereby स्वर्गकामो भ्रातृव्यमभिभवति विनुत्या भ्रातृव्यम् विनुदते) following in the rear. The only inference I feel justified in drawing from all this is that the *Vrātyas* calling for conversion having by this time disappeared from the picture, and numerous caste-groups (which by now have come to be established as such in a way to be hereafter described) offering ready asylum (without Brāhmaṇic interposition) to waifs and strays from the higher castes, the *Vrātyastoma* as a whole had ceased to be of practical importance, and continued to be dealt with by the Sūtra writers as a literary duty rather than as a social necessity.

The Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra is earlier than the Āpastamba and is recognised as one of the earliest Sūtra works. The fact that this work is written more in the style of a Brāhmaṇa than other works belonging to the same class is cogent evidence of its earlier composition.

but they mix them up together also in other very strange ways. Thus the Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra (XXII.1. 4-28) whilst stating the purposes of the several *stomas* quite accurately, the first *stoma* being specifically stated to be for भ्रात्यगणाः, proceeds to require a *grhapati* for all the four classes of cases. The effect generally for all the cases is said to be भ्रात्यस्तोमैरिष्टा भ्रात्यभावाद्द्विरमेयुः ; व्यवहाय्या भवन्ति ।



In his treatment of the Conversion *stoma* (XVIII. 24), Baudhāyana, to my mind, lets the cat altogether out of the bag : no *yājñic* rituals are called for ; no *dakṣiṇā* ; no Brāhmaṇ *ṛtvijas*. The Vrātya *sthapati* (the *grhapati* of the PB) and his followers between them are left to carry the show through in their own way. To start with, there is no गार्हपत्याग्नि, for who will offer his sacred fire to be used for Vrātyas and thereby incur who knows what unknown sins ? Therefore the *grhapati*'s रथोपस्थ has perforce to serve for the गार्हपत्य. And every part of the rest of the business is conceived and ordered in the same spirit. But the performers are judiciously warned not to make a public exhibition of the farcical expedient, परोक्षमुपेत्य प्रत्यक्षं नोपेयुः, they are advised.

They, for all the Brāhmaṇs cared, might use there own ब्राह्म्यवाद, it would be taken to have the same effect as the right दीक्षितवाद ; and whatever other hocus pocus they went through, as the spirit moved them, was to be similarly made-believe as the one or the other of the essential links in the prescribed chain of ceremonies which were conceived to be essential for binding them for all time to the Aryan communion as though they were full-blooded members thereof !

I have previously indicated that the Conversion *Vrātyastoma* of the Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa might very probably have been by origin an adaptation of the *Vrātyastoma* for the excommunicate. It looks as though, as originally conceived, it need not have been even that. Any colourable performance, provided the intention was there, served the purpose just as well. As I shall presently show, this was what might have been expected.

### Section III.

**The Conversion *Vrātyastoma* : A Political not a Religious Ritual admissible for Aryans and Non-Aryans alike. The Largest Accession to Aryanism, from the Non-Aryan East.**

There is an overwhelming preponderance of learned opinion that the *Vrātya* who sought admission and was admitted must in any case have been of Aryan extraction. The material wherein this *sine qua non* may be supposed to be lurking is contained in two sentences of the PB XVII. 1. 9 : अदीक्षिता दीक्षितवाचं वदन्ति ; अदुहकवाक्यं दुहकमाहुः । In the copy of the Commentary on the *Lātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra* in the Dacca University Library<sup>4</sup>, I find the first quoted as दीक्षिता दीक्षितवाचं वदन्ति implying (if it be no misquotation, I am not sure it is) ability to pick up the Aryan speech *after* conversion, which would not however carry with it ability to pronounce correctly, and this is just what is implied in the other sentence. This reading may be the right reading or not, but it does certainly possess the merit of harmonising perfectly with the *Baudhāyana* picture.

<sup>4</sup> The *Śrauta Sūtra* of *Lātyāyana* with the Commentary of *Agnisvami*, edited by *Ānanda Chandra Vendāntavāgīśa*. The word preceding those quoted is चरन्त्यः which is obviously wrong. It must be either चरन्त्य or चरन्तः. Besides the *Baudhāyana* text referred to, my surmise that the word in question is दीक्षिताः and not अदीक्षिताः receives support also from the passage from the *Vrātyastoma* texts in the *Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa* (II. 222), which assigns, to the unconverted, speech which is अग्रतम् and अग्नेभ्यम् ।

The texts so far considered taken all together make it plain in any case that a time there was when the Aryan was eagerly anxious to absorb outsiders into his community without searching inquiry into their credentials in the matter of race, descent or respectability even.

The description found encrusted in the *Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* texts marks the people for whom the *stoma* was originally framed as rather questionable gentry, gipsy-like vagrants or other similar nondescript banditti, and very far from being blue-blooded Varangians.

But assume for argument's sake that the primitive Vedic Aryan *viś* was as squeamish and discriminating in the matter of admitting outsiders into their free-masonry as these writers (and they include Weber and Bloomfield !) suppose them to have been. What conceivable was in that case the Vedic Aryan aristocrat's test for determining the Aryancy or the contrary of the suppliant for admission into the *viś* ? Not the Risleyan anthropometric test in any event (it is so thoroughly discredited already) ! It was not language I am convinced, the evidence supplied by the *Baudhyāyana Sūtras* being conclusive on the point. Complexion ? Perhaps, but for just so long as the settlers had only *Daśyu* "black-fellows" to contend against to protect their homes and cattle. But soon the settlements are so many that they fall out and fight amongst themselves, with these very *Daśyus* often for allies. The fact is, there is little reason for assuming that the early Aryans were very presentable gentry themselves ; or that at this time they were or could afford to be as aristocratically minded or snobbish as some of them later came to be. Living in the midst of enemies, these small settlements had frequent need for recruits into their ranks ; and they had to be smart proselytisers if the vagrants and

bandits (who were valued for their muscles and not for their manners and deportment) were not to be snapped up by rival settlements with just the same need for man-power. Nothing, not even complexion, stood in the way when the need proved imperious. How, otherwise, could the black (*kṛṣṇa*, *śyāma*) complexion come eventually to be regarded in Paurāṇic times as an attraction in men and women alike ?

The admission of outsiders into the Aryan communion was never aught but a stern political necessity which disregarded religious and social punctilios and susceptibilities as irrelevancies.

At that time the Brāhmaṇas, as I have already stated, were not the first of castes, but just the priestly leaders of settlements which lay hemmed in on all sides by enemies ; witch-doctors in a sense, but for all that realists who did not need to be taught that self-preservation was the highest of virtues and the first of religious duties. Any ceremony, a colourable make-believe even, served the turn provided only that it signified a solemn abjuration of the old ties for those assumed and a substantial addition to the man-power of the community which was adopting these new recruits as its members.

This scholarly obsession that the Aryan Brāhmaṇas even in those days, were always sniffing at foreigners, in order to guard the sacred settlements from being polluted by contact with the Non-Aryan, is responsible for the extraordinary failure to follow up the clues, furnished in abundance by the Vedic and the Paurāṇic literature in references which invariably associate the Vrātya with the East, right into the heart and centre of Indo-Aryan pre-history.



Who, they seem to imply, could possibly even imagine that the Aryan influx, arriving whether in thin streams or in swelling currents, had ever moved otherwise than from the West eastward ?

And yet, what are you to make of the almost indissoluble association of the Vrātya with that eastern mountebank, the Māgadha, in the Atharva Veda and in the Śrauta Sūtras? His travelling car, upon the exact nature of which the Sūtra doctors can scarcely agree, is affirmed by one of the latest of them to be neither more nor less than a प्राच्यरथ (Lātyāyana VIII. 6: 9) a vehicle of eastern make (Lātyānana seems to have had local knowledge of the East). This recurring freakish allusion to Eastern people, Eastern lands and Eastern things, scholars do their best to palliate or excuse, and having done so, turn again resolutely towards the West for signs and portents which will finally, they hope, solve to their complete satisfaction and make intelligible the enigma of the Vrātya and of the Eka-Vrātya of the Vrātya Book (XV) of the Atharva Veda.

And behold ! it is not the jabbering (अतिक्रुष्ट, see the Puruṣamedha text, VS XXX) court-parasite of a Māgadha only who is found inseparably and insufferably associated with the Vrātya. Along with him must also come sailing in, in all her venal attractions, the mincing *Pumschalī* (hetaera, harlot) ! The Aryan might be a wine-bibber and a gourmand ; but in matters of sexual propriety, is he not and has he not ever been (with unfortunate exceptions, of course) an example to other folk ? But this Vrātya (perforce an Aryan), even when he is exalted as a *brahmavid* and glorified to the point of deification as the Eka-Vrātya, why cannot he be mentioned, and by a Vedic seer and hymnologist too, otherwise than as being pursued and shadowed by the

spectres of these creatures? Did scholars ever have to set themselves to solving a more exasperating riddle?

The fact simply is that this Vṛātya is Eastern and of the East; and a Non-Aryan, if "Aryan" must, as these scholars suppose, mean only the Vedic Aryan hailing from the West! And one must prepare oneself for and accustom himself to the notion that the Vedic world's largest and most noteworthy accession of manpower came from the East, the Anupadeśa, and in such numbers and volume besides that it is a matter indeed for extreme thankfulness and surprise that that world was not completely overwhelmed and submerged by this rolling inundation, leaving behind it no track or trace whatever or a footmark even to remind one of the existence of one of the most remarkable of freak communities thrown up by the accidents of history, I mean, the Vedic Aryans of the Indus valley. And it speaks volumes also for the virility and intense moral vigour of the strongest and the most determinative element in the materially weaker Vedic stream (Brāhmaṇism) that, so far from allowing its forces to be dissipated and destroyed, it took on the other hand the prevailing part in a process which in the fulness of time led to the crystallization of the combined Aryan and Non-Aryan material in that most remarkable and distinctive of cultural phenomena, the Indo-Aryan *Vārṇa-āśrama-dharma*.

Brāhmaṇism bent, but never broke before the might of the Vṛātya, the Eka-Vṛātya of the Atharva Vedā. But bend it had to, and that mainly in the political sense.



## Section IV

### Contrasting Political and Social Conditions of the Vedic Aryan Settlements *vis-a-vis* the Vrātya Empire of the East. Light from the Purāṇas.

To understand the circumstances which made it necessary for the proud Brāhmaṇ spirit to submit to the political domination of the Eastern Eka-Vrātya, it will be necessary to visualise with some particularity the conditions which prevailed in the Aryan political and social units of the West. They were small, scattered and more or less detached communities of a rather simple social organization. The R̥gVeda mentions quite a number of trades and professions, but these were neither so numerous nor so complex as to fill to overflowing even such a simple receptacle of civilization and culture as a typical Indian village community in the condition in which it might be conceived to have existed before the British European impact. In this little world of a very restricted social horizon, the profession (not a caste yet) which exercised the dominating influence was the Brāhmaṇ's. They, the Brāhmaṇs, were more than witch-doctors, for they directed the education of the youth of the *viś* (who were all expected for a suitable number of years<sup>5</sup> to live as *brahmachārīn* pupils in the families of Brāhmaṇ preceptors) and enforced severe moral discipline on themselves and on the members

<sup>5</sup> The number of years and the kind of training appear to have varied according to the profession the pupil was expected to follow.

of the other professions, including the profession which kept the peace within the community and guarded it from external attack ; and they made the community as a whole *svarga-kāma*, a characteristic which can be found in only one other historic priestly order, namely, the Christian Catholic Church of Medieval Europe<sup>6</sup>. There is conclusive evidence in Indo-Aryan literature that this domination and discipline were intensely resented, and when submitted to, were borne with extremely bad grace by the equally intensely (politically) self-conscious Kṣatriya profession, a phenomenon which also finds an apt analogue in European Medieval history in the opposition to the Church's domination by Kings and Princes.

6. The above is by no means an imaginary picture. I made a point, before I drew up this sketch, of preparing a digest of the whole body of ritualistic practices described in the Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa and the specific objects which they are stated to subserve. The world which emerged into view from this analytical treatment of the very best and completest data available was a world of small house-holders, cultivators, shepherds, farmers, petty chieftains and priests, a world of which the whole material outlook was of an extraordinarily limited character. Amongst the ritualistic practices described are some which, as will be seen, were imported from the spacious world of the East (the Rājasūya, Āsvamedha and other Royal ceremonies). But the compiler of this Brāhmaṇa is plainly unable to expand his own personal outlook beyond the limited horizon of his usual themes which are physical health and strength ; food and progeny ; cattle, horses and mules ; and so on, repeated time and again with wearisome iteration. This "chronicle of small beer" is varied by a more occasionally expressed desire for "firm support", "priestly lustre", "wealth" and "prosperity", the widest (and also the vaguest) concept of well-being limned being *svarga*, which, of course, is the same limited world over again with but its trials, troubles and contrarieties completely smoothed down.

The Pañchaviṃśa is one of the earliest Brāhmaṇas, as the Śatapatha (barring the Gopatha) is the latest. The horizon of the latter is distinctly a wider one and of ampler contents,

These little Aryan settlements were not havens of peace, either internally or externally ; and when they coalesced, as they sometimes did for political reasons, the strife within the community, between priestly school and priestly school, between them and the nobility, and between groups or individuals within the latter, accentuated. No better picture of the condition that prevailed can be imagined than is found depicted in the accounts of the Yādava Federation in the Mahābhārata and the Harivaṃśa.<sup>7</sup> Uncomplicated at any rate by discords between the priesthood and the nobility, the Greek City States were embodiments of harmony and understanding compared with the wrangling and strife which were almost chronic in the Vedic Aryan settlements.

What a contrast to all this is presented by whatever records we possess of the Eastern States of Videha and Kośāla. But the typical Eastern State would be not these but the Magadha of Jarāsandha.

Jarāsandha conquered the outlying areas, not to make vassals of their chiefs but to annex them, carrying the chieftains captive to his capital at Giribraja, the city of decorated *chaityas* and the flourishing abode of a contented populace consisting of all four *varṇas* हृष्टपुष्टजनोपेतं चातुर्वर्ग्यसमाकुलम् । स्फीतोत्सवमनाश्च्यम् ... ॥ Mahābhā. Sabhā 21.13-14), the capital of the "land of the Magadhas", which by the favour of Manu (so observes Kṛṣṇa) had been made incapable of suffering from droughts, अपरिहाय्या मेघानां मागधा मनुना कृता: *Idem*, 21.10). The feud between the Yādava Confederacy and Jarāsandha which is described with such life-like vividness in this Parva by Kṛṣṇa is reminiscent of a

<sup>7</sup> Fine historical material which, like another not very dissimilar source of historical data (the Rājatarāṅginī of Kāśmīr), remains unexploited.

struggle which, over and above the internecine strife and wrangling which prevailed within the Aryan settlements must all the time have been going on between the two distinct types of polities and cultures of which these two were the representatives and protagonists.<sup>8</sup>

The internecine feud which, as I have stated, was chronic within the Aryan settlements between the two orders of the Aryan aristocracy (not yet hardened into castes, though no doubt they had already begun to look down upon each other and upon the rest of the general population, that is to say, the *viś*, not yet ear-marked as the *Vaiśyas*) is finely reflected in the *Pr̥thu-Vaiṇya* legend, recounted with unwearied iteration in several of the *Purāṇas*, and, historically, one of the most significant to be found in this literature.

*Veṇa*, one of a line of chieftains (not a King consecrated as such) appointed to keep order amongst men (the *Manu Saṃhitā* styles him a *Rājaṛṣi*), a Vedic Aryan chieftain evidently from all available marks and indications, quarrels with the *Brāhmaṇs*, and apparently seeks to starve that overbearing order into submission by prohibiting his subjects from performing *yajñas* (there was no ban, mark, on the worship of the *Lares* and *Penates* round the *gr̥hya* fire, nor on the even pursuit in the strict orthodox style of the normal round of the *saṃskāras* and ceremonies which punctuated and marked the even tenor of the Vedic Aryan house-holder's existence from before birth to death and beyond), and called upon them to disregard the *Brāhmaṇs* and their *Devas* (meaning, no doubt, those for whom the *yajñas* proper of those days, the *soma* and other hieratic sacrifices, were held) and fall to worshipping and offering sacrifices to him *Veṇa*, citing therefor as an all-sufficient

<sup>8</sup> For details, see Section XIV, *infra*.



justification the fact that he was the foremost in courage, enlightenment and self-discipline, and in probity and greatness of soul inferior to none, besides that physically speaking he was the most powerful individual in the community.<sup>9</sup> The Brāhman, enraged beyond endurance, kill the chieftain out of hand. But Veṇa was childless, and the Brāhman, who were not vindictive and did not desire that he, Veṇa, should starve for lack of oblations in the special purgatory which the gods had provided for the sonless, forthwith set about creating out of his royal body an heir by the application of the fire-stick ! The issue somehow of this first experiment turns out to be a sort of changeling, the diminutive black-complexioned Niṣāda, who immediately is banished to the Vindhya Hills, there in course of time to become the parent stock of various *mlechchha* tribes of fisherfolk and others. But the second experiment is more than successful, for the outcome is Pr̥thu, who later is to be the first of "Consecrated Kings" (the "Consecrated King", be it noted here, is by origin an institution belonging to the Non-Aryan East, as will be seen) and will make the Earth (hitherto uneven and untillable) plain and cultivable, divide it up into provinces and townships, build roads thereon for mercantile

<sup>9</sup> I cannot withhold my unstinted admiration for the personality of this Rājārṣi who must have been a very live individual to have created animosity in the hearts of the Brāhman which lasted through ages. That very recent hide-bound caste-Brāhman, the author of the Manu Saṃhitā, must needs bracket him with Nahuṣa, Sudasa, Sumukha and Nimi (all Vedic Aryan chieftains) amongst Rājanyas who met their end through lack of proper subserviency to the Brāhman (Manu VII. 41) In Ch. IX. 66, 67, where the practice of begetting sons on a wife by *niyoga* and the marriage of widows are reprobated as *पशुधर्मः*, it is gratuitously affirmed that these came into a world that knew them not, as did the equally reprobated Babel of castes (*वर्णसंस्कार*) when that mighty but power-crazed Rājārṣi ruled the universe.

traffic (वणिक्पथ), introduce the arts of agriculture and cow-keeping, and make the earth fruitful in every other way, so that it is under his royal sway that the earth becomes वसुन्धरा in fact as well as in name. The consecration ceremony is supervised by no other than Prajāpati himself (an Ātharvanic god of Vrātya origin, by the way) assisted by the *ṛsis*. All living creatures willingly co-operate in the performance of this *sattra*. The tale of miracles is not complete yet. Out of the *yajñas* issue two creatures, the Sūta and the Māgadha, who are immediately employed in singing the praises of the King and of the Royal House he has founded, and this they do in such style that they are forthwith appointed hereditary chroniclers and singers of Royal sagas, and the lands of Anupadeśa (Aṅga, in some versions) and Magadha are assigned to them respectively for subsistence.

The Earth Pṛthu rules is प्रथिता प्रविभक्ता शोभिता शस्याकरवती स्फीता चातुर्वर्ण्यसमाकीर्णा पुरपत्तनशालिनी वसुन्धरा, Vāyu Purāṇa, 62. 4 ; Harivaṃśa 6. 46-47. It shows a remarkable family likeness to the country ruled by Jarāsandha. It exhibits a similar or even greater likeness, as will be seen later, to the Pṛthivī (Bhumi) ruled by the Eka-Vrātya of the Vrātya Book of the Atharva Veda. Each of these worlds demonstrably included Magadha.

Pṛthu, without any effort on his part, obtains homage from all classes and orders, including, as the Purāṇas take particular care to specify, the Brāhmaṇs, even the most exalted amongst them. For, as the Vāyu Purāṇa puts it, नमस्त्यश्चैव पूज्यश्च भूतप्राप्तेः सर्वशः । ब्राह्मणैश्च महाभागैः वेदवेदाङ्ग पारगैः ॥ पृथुरेव नमस्कार्यः ... ।

In the Mahābhārata version (Sānti 59), where an attempt is plainly made to take Pṛthu down a peg or two, truth nevertheless leaks out where it is stated that he, Pṛthu, came to be called Kṣatriya because he had saved



the Brāhmaṇs from all possibilities of harm: ब्राह्मणानां क्षत्रत्रायात्  
ततः क्षत्रियमुच्यते ।

All the trite Brāhmaṇising bombast which is woven into this legendary narrative fails to disguise the fact that Prthu was not of the breed of the Vedic Aryan warlord. He was King by divine right, and allegiance was owed to him by every individual within his Peace, even if he should be the most highly placed amongst the Brāhmaṇs, as though it was a part of the ordinances of nature. He did not merely guide the destinies of bodies of small house-holders ; he was an Emperor of wide-flung lands and tracts, which certainly included Aṅga and Magadha and ran close up to the Vindhya range, and might for aught we know have included Kāśi, Kośala and Videha to the north of the river Ganges (so as to cover the entire Anupadeśa). His subjects were a mixed lot held together, not as were the members of an Aryan *viś* by common custom, common sentiments and common gods, but by the might of an autocratic ruler. They included many autochthonous tribes lumped together under the common designation of Niṣādas, and other people who, whatever they might have been ethnologically, were unknown in the Aryan *viśas*, a conglomeration of many peoples and (let the fact be faced) castes, pursuing different occupations, worshipping different gods even, professing different customs and *mores*, a microcosm, each one of them, within the macrocosm of the Empire, an Empire of Vrātya people ruled by a Vrātya Emperor, presenting diametrical contrasts in every respect to the simpler and very much more unified and unitary composition of the Aryan *viśas*, which became fractious only because of the rivalry for leadership between the two politically conscious classes, the Brāhmaṇs and Kṣatriyas. The moral and material outlook of this Empire or its people

could have borne no relation whatever to the petty parochialities, we have noticed, of the Aryan settlements.

It is clear too from this legend that the Aryan Brāhmaṇs had become thoroughly dissatisfied with the Vena kind of Kṣatriya chieftains preferring thereto the rule of the Vṛātya Eastern Emperor; and the legend not improbably disguises and covers up the traces of an act of organised disloyalty; the Eastern Emperor might well have been invited to undertake, and even actively aided therein, by rebellious Brāhmaṇs in a campaign of conquest of their own native settlements. Let us assume, however, that all this story of the Brāhmaṇs killing Vena is as much of a myth as the alleged procreation of a legitimate heir on the royal body by the wonder-working fire-stick. The legend establishes beyond doubt or cavil that the Brāhmaṇs concerned did pass from out of the stormy Peace of the chieftains of the Vena order into the Peace of the Vṛātya Emperor who is King by divine right, be the material means, by which this transference of allegiance was accomplished, what they might. And then the real miracle happened. In this new environment, the like of which the Aryan Brāhmaṇs had never experienced or dreamed of experiencing in their native settlements, the Emperor easily and automatically wins from the Brāhmaṇs the homage and worship, for demanding which Vena (according to the legend) had to pay with his life. No mere Kṣatriya war-lord of the *viś* could ever dream of receiving the abject worship that is implied in the following lines :

तस्य संस्तम्भिता ह्यापः समुद्रमभियास्यतः ।  
 पर्वताश्च ददुर्मागं ध्वजभङ्गश्च नाभवत् ॥  
 तं वनस्पतयः शैला देवासुरमहोरगाः ।  
 सप्तर्षयः पुण्यजना गन्धर्वाप्सरसोऽपि च ॥  
 पितरश्च सुखासीनमभिगम्येदमब्रुवन् ।  
 सन्नाडसि क्षत्रियोऽसि राजा गोप्ता पितासि नः ॥

देहास्मभ्यं महाराज प्रभुः सन्नीप्सितान् वरान् ।

यैर्वयं शाश्वती स्तृसीर्ध्वत्तं विष्यामहे सुखम् ॥

Mahābhā. Drona 66. 9—12.

And Pr̥thu Vaiṇya is not a Paurāṇic figure only. Sūkta 148 of the Xth Maṇḍala of the R̥gVeda attributes its authorship to Pr̥thi Vaiṇya, and a Pr̥thi Vaiṇya is spoken of in RV VIII. 9. 10 as performing *yajñas* to the Aśvins in the right orthodox style. But all these are plainly not conclusive for showing that Pr̥thi Vaiṇya was not an Emperor of the East who was induced to accept for himself and his people the Aryan communion by an act of proselytization. The Śānti Parva version of the Pr̥thu Vaiṇya legend in the Mahābhārata makes Pr̥thu swear to the Brāhmaṇs that he would at all cost maintain the sacred inviolability of the Brāhmaṇs. The same version further says that Pr̥thu got the title of Kṣatriya because of his having placed the Brāhmaṇs above and beyond all apprehensions of injury. That is obviously as far as the Brāhmaṇ composer (or reviser) of this legend could ever be expected to go.

To have stated baldly that the Brāhmaṇs swore eternal allegiance to the Vrātya Emperor because he undertook to defend them and their faith, in token whereof he graciously agreed for himself and for his people to enter the Aryan communion—the whole arrangement smacking thus of a kind of concordat between the Emperor and those who exercised dominating influence in the Vedic Aryan settlements, with a view really and ultimately to keep down the fractious Kṣatriya element in these settlements—would not only have been to ride roughshod over all notions of poetic proprieties, it would, from the point of view of the author of the legend, have given

the whole Brāhmaṇ show away ; for instead of putting the Brāhmaṇs forward as King-makers and dictators, they would have been exhibited in the ignoble role of suppliants for protection before a foreign power and the betrayers of their own order of governors and rulers. This, as nearly as it is permissible to speak of such matters with assurance, is presumably what happened.

And there are positive links also between the Pṛthu Vaiṇya of the Purāṇas and the Pṛthi Vaiṇya of the Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas. In Atharva Veda VIII. 10. 24, Pṛthi Vaiṇya is stated to have milked Virāj (Rule ? Dominion ? Earth ?) and thereby obtained for men cultivation (*kṛṣi*) and grains, the two essentials of their sustenance. In the Purāṇa version the two things are separated : Pṛthu invents the art of agriculture, and later by a dramatic exhibition of his might as a warrior and autocratic ruler he cows poor Pṛthivī into abject submission and milks her of all her wealth. The Purāṇas have this trick of taking up abstract notions from the Śrutis and dressing them up into concrete events. The other link is found in several of the Brāhmaṇas, of which mention need be made only of the Śatapatha (V. 3. 5. 4) where, as in the Purāṇas, Pṛthi is spoken of as the first of "Consecrated Kings."<sup>10</sup>

What progress I have already made in narrowing down the distance between the Pṛthu of the Purāṇas and the Eka-Vrātya of Book XV of the Atharva Veda will appear when I shall have presented an equally complete picture of the latter drawn from material gathered from the Atharva Veda. This is the topic which I should take in hand immediately. But example is catching, and the Vena

<sup>10</sup> The Harivamśa (II. 24) pointedly says :

राजसूयाभिषिक्तानामाद्यं स वदुवाधिपः ।

legend has, I fear, gone into my head ; and I cannot resist the temptation of indulging in a little historical romance (Purāṇa) on my own account. The romance which will form the subject of the next Section will differ from most other romances which have been written in being a romance, in the substantial fidelity of which to facts the author has the fullest faith. That faith is founded upon the care which he has taken to make it not only acceptable as a coherent story agreeing with all the ordinary probabilities, but also to see that each part of it and the story taken as a whole are made strictly accordant in every particular with all the data available which have any bearing upon the Eka-Vrātya and his Empire. Whether I shall be justified in claiming this as an extreme instance of the exercise of the kind of scientific imagination, such as one meets with every day in all modern treatments of questions belonging to the very similarly circumstanced sciences of palaeontology and cosmogony, I shall not pause here to consider or determine. All I would say now is that the romance which will form the subject of the next Section is a very necessary step in the proper presentation of my thesis upon the Vrātya Book of the Atharva Veda.



## Section V

**A Chapter (mainly) of Historical Romance : (i) Aryan Brāhmaṇs in the Eka-Vrātya's Court. (ii) The Great Vrātyastoma Ekāha-Sattra. (iii) The Composition of the Vrātya Book.**

Disputes and differences which break out with such violence in the realm of Veṇa seethe and simmer in nearly all the Vedic Aryan *viśas* and *viś*-confederacies where they do not actually take more manifest forms. Although, in a general way, the Brāhmaṇs succeed in making their wishes prevail within these settlements, neither branch of the official aristocracy appears to have such a clear title of superiority over the other that the party who loses ground in any contest, be it the Brāhmaṇ or the Kṣatriya, is willing to submit to the situation without demur and without inwardly harbouring the desire to obtain the upper hand at the next turn. When the differences become very acute, as the physical power rests with the Kṣatriyas, many Brāhmaṇs are compelled to leave their native settlements and seek refuge in foreign lands<sup>11</sup>. Travellers from foreign countries have been telling stories of the state and magnificence of the Court of the Emperor of the Great Vrātya country of Anupadeśa and Magadha.

<sup>11</sup> I have to dismiss the statements recorded in the extant completely Brāhmaṇised Purāṇas, that the Brāhmaṇs *unaided* repeatedly rid the earth of the recalcitrant Kṣatriyas by force of arms, as propaganda run mad. The Paraśurāma of the Purāṇas, in particular, with whom these stories are mostly associated, is even more impossible than the stories themselves.



Some very learned Brāhmaṇs, unable any longer to put up with the arrogance and petty persecutions of their own chieftains, finally abjure the Peace of these little-minded tyrants, and shaking the dust of Aryan-land off their feet seek asylum in the Great Vrātya's Court.

It is a strange country altogether, this Kingdom of the Great Vrātya. Everybody defers to him and implicitly obeys his orders. In issuing his orders and ordinances, he does not consult the local Brāhmaṇs, and no blame to him for this, for, truth to tell, the Brāhmaṇs of the land are very poor specimens. The best of them who live in the Court of the King are chiefly employed in composing and recounting on state and other occasions the mighty deeds of the members of the Royal house and of the nobility ; and they officiate also as priests in the *gr̥hya* ceremonies of their noble employers, which are very different indeed from those practised in the Aryan house-holds. The King and the nobles, however, are highly intelligent men and do not appear to think much of these ceremonies, which in truth are marked by a multitude of superstitious beliefs and practices whereof incantation and witchcraft form the prevailing features. These saga-singing and spell-mongering Brāhmaṇs also officiate at the religious ceremonies of the common people who are not at all like the people of the Aryan *viśas*. Here each profession appears to form a *viś* by itself with its special beliefs and practices ; and even the gods worshipped by one professional group appear to be different from those worshipped by the others. But they all believe in ghosts, witches, sorcerors and demons of all descriptions, and the ministration of the priests (who go by the names of Sūtas and Māgadhas, according to the parts of the country of which they are the natives) consists chiefly in the pronouncing of set spells and charms and the practising of exorcisms and the ordaining of elaborate

expiatory rites for sins real as well as imagined. The people, grouped as they mostly are according to the pursuits they follow for a living, do not intermarry or interdine, one group with another, each group forming a separate *jāti*. The Sūtas and Māgadhas too form separate *jātis*, and the Rājanyas also are a *jāti* by themselves.<sup>12</sup>

And the strangest thing of all is that these people know nothing of *yajñs* and *sattras*. The only public ceremonies which interest them are certain great Royal functions, at which all the people are expected to join in one way or another, and these are more like public festivities than *sattras* or *yajñs* in the Aryan sense, which are really invocations addressed to the possessors of supernatural powers, the Aryan gods themselves.

The Rājanyas, though they do not perform *yajñs* and *sattras*, hold very advanced religious views. They believe in certain Great Gods who more resemble the Varuṇa of the Aryan Pantheon than Indra, Soma, or Agni. Also, they have very fine ideas concerning the origin of the universe, of life and mind, and the King and the nobles often hold interminable discussions on cosmogonic and theosophic subjects, which however they on no account impart to the common people, treating it all as a science esoteric in their own order. These Rājanyas appear to have been foreigners originally, who had come and conquered this country of hills, plains and river valleys, rich in cultivation and the other fruits and products of the

<sup>12</sup> The Vṛātya Rājanyas' attitude was not unlike the attitude of the Roman officials towards the popular religious superstitions of their respective countries. They tolerated and even participated in them from considerations of political expediency. For ordering their own inner lives, the Roman officials as a rule either practised the Stoic philosophy or followed esoteric cults imported from the East.

arts and industries, and had imposed themselves as rulers over a population consisting of very diverse kinds of people.<sup>13</sup> The generality of the people of this country appears to be very docile, with no spirit in them, and this is quite intelligible, seeing that they live in constant fear of, and are in consequence perpetually engaged in preparations for warding off, imaginary dangers from witches, sorcerers, demons and ghosts and the shadows of their own sins even before they have been committed, by necromancies of every description.

The strangers from Aryan-land, being discovered to be political exiles, easily gain audience of the King who is found to be greatly interested in whatever may be happening in the Aryan settlements. The Brāhmaṇs favourably impress him by their intelligence and culture. The conversation soon turns upon the circumstances which made them abjure the land of their birth. The Great Vrātya explains to the Brāhmaṇs how impossible it is for communities to make any progress politically or economically if

<sup>13</sup> Another reflection which is suggested by the circumstances mentioned is that possibly these Rājanyas represented an earlier wave of immigration on the part of a people who might or might not have had remote Aryan affinities. That they had little part or share in Vedic Aryan customs and *mores* seems pretty clear. It is a mistake very widely entertained that India has received immigrants through the Khyber and Bolan passes only. The indigenous people of China had for centuries been ruled by a race of immigrants who had dispersed from perhaps the same centre as did the Aryans, though probably not at the same time. The Vrātya Rājanyas might very well have been off-shoots of that race.

They might have been speaking a language not fundamentally different from the Vedic Aryan's when they arrived and imposed themselves upon the indigenous autochthonous tribes and other previously settled races. Was the Piśūcha language of the Kathā Literature by any means the language which they imposed upon the subject people who came into direct contact with them in the manner in which they had imposed their sovereignty upon them?

they are perpetually torn by internal feuds and are besides continually warring with each other. He points out how the Aryan settlements have formed a kind of "no man's land" between his Empire and the Empires on the other sides of the mountains; and what an advantage it would be if the whole of this land could be brought under one sway (*virāj*), and civilised methods of agriculture and other arts of peace as well as roads for traffic, such as they saw established in his own country, should spread also over the Aryan lands. He is not for seeking warlike adventures in such poor countries as the Aryan settlers had made of their settlements. But these settlements are proving an all-round source of disturbance. Could they not be made to see the advantage to themselves of acknowledging his suzerainty, so that they would not only have the advantage of finding an impartial arbitrator to intervene in and settle their disputes, but by lending aid, instead of continually offering resistance, to the execution by him of his own enlightened policies share in the peace and prosperity of his own rule?

The Brāhman̄s appreciate the point of view, and have many more like audiences at which this and other matters are discussed, in the course of which they discover that the Great Vrātya was a free-thinker in matters of faith, and had generally a poor opinion of the forms of religion as they were observed in his own land or as, he gathered, were practised by the Aryans in theirs. But he could and did speak with great charm and persuasiveness on certain views about the origin of the world, of life and of mind, which he would discuss with his noblemen.

The net result is that they are a great deal more impressed by the Great Vrātya than the latter is by them, and keenly regret that there was not an Emperor like him to be found in all Aryan land; and they discuss, between

themselves, what a pity it was that he was a Vrātya and not an Aryan. Had he indeed been an Aryan and not a Vrātya Emperor, considering his power, magnificence wealth, culture and intelligence, his proposed invitation to the Aryan chieftains to accept his suzerainty would not have appeared as fantastic as it looked, coming from a Vrātya. Things had indeed reached such a pass in Aryan land that what had been proposed by the Eka-Vrātya would impress the very backwoodsmen, even amongst the Aryan chieftains, as the only possible way out, if only he were not a Vrātya. The idea now dawns in the mind of the most intelligent of the strangers : Why not propose to the Great Vrātya that he, his people (the nobles as well as the common folk) and his land should all accept Aryanism and become Aryan ?

At the next audience, he explains to the Great Vrātya how he has been minimising the difficulties in the way of his overtures to the Aryan chieftains, to accept his overlordship, obtaining a favourable reception. Unlike His Majesty, the Aryan chieftains and priests, and in fact the *vis* as a whole, thought a great deal of their religion and religious practices. They would never bend their heads before a Vrātya. If only he, as the *grhapati* of this fair Kingdom and its population, would go through a certain simple ceremony and thereby accept for him and them the Aryan sacrament, matters would be immediately placed on a most favourable footing. His Majesty, so far as he has been able to observe, did not care two straws what ceremonies were actually observed in his kingdom or even in his household : whether they were Vrātya or Aryan was all one to him. And acceptance of the Aryan sacrament will not also necessarily mean the immediate abandonment by him and his people of the practices to which they were accustomed. They, the Brāhmaṇs, have been wont to

A5.



make things rather easy for strangers and people newly admitted to Aryanism.<sup>14</sup>

For themselves, the more they thought of the plan, the more it appeared to gain in attractiveness and feasibility. The common folk were more given to superstitions and odd practices than the men of the *viś* in their own settlements ; but they were on the other hand more easily led, and will do whatever they are told. That they knew nothing of *yajñas* and *sattras* did not matter so long as the immigrant Brāhmaṇs remained too few to perform them in proper style and not too many to be absorbed in the King's service. And as regards the spells and other necromancies, these, as they were performed, were rather outlandish, but not very dissimilar from some of those which the Brāhmaṇs themselves could barely do without in their own lands. The gods had been very good to the Aryans, giving them a sufficiency of food and cattle, progeny and power, and had been specially good in strengthening their strong right arms against human enemies, but even they failed to help and succour upon occasions ; diseases, for instance, were known to have often yielded to spells and charms when *sattras* held at great expenditure of resources seemed to be of no avail. This land truly was a land of plenty, but it was a land also of divers bodily ills and mysterious ailments ; of snakes and man-eating tigers who might get you, you know not when or how ; and every third man or woman here was

<sup>14</sup> Witness the Conversion *Vrūtyastoma* as described by Baudhāyana ; and Lātyānana's account of the Śyenābhichāra of the *Vrātīnas* prescribed in the *Sadvimśa Brāhmaṇa*. *Vrātīnas*, according to Patañjali, were नानाजातीया अनियतवृत्तय उत्सेदजीविनः संघाः, nondescript gangs of labourers, drawn apparently from all kinds of communities, whose one point in common was that they did not organically belong to the *viś* (Lātyā. VIII. 5). The ceremony is classed in the *Āśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra* amongst the आगन्तुका विकाराः (IX. 7)

known to be a sorcerer or a witch. The practices which were observed appeared to serve their purpose and might be allowed to remain. Their normal *gṛhya* practices appeared truly to be extremely outlandish ; but there was no reason for doubting that they could be persuaded in time to abandon them in favour of approved Aryan practices by judicious schooling and propaganda of the right kind.

From the Brāhmaṇ immigrants' personal point of view, the chief recommendation of the plan was that once it was carried out their own promotion from their present precarious position as casual foreign intriguers and court-parasites to the rank of the King's Chancellor and chaplain, of ministers, councillors and priests, stood assured.

The Brāhmaṇ immigrants' advocacy in favour of holding a Great *Vṛātyastoma* ceremony strikes responsive chords in the hearts and imaginations of the Emperor and his Rājanya following, free-thinkers and statesmen almost to a man. It is a very practicable scheme too. No real breach of continuity in the existing order will occur. Their own *rājākarmāṇi* were likely to improve in attractiveness and artistic flavour in the hands of this superior breed of priests. There was no question that his own prestige and influence in Aryan land will rise and be placed on a higher and securer footing, which will be independent altogether of the personal factor.

The bargain is struck ; the concordat is agreed to.

The details of the ceremony are worked out in close consultation between the King and the Rājanyas on the one hand and the Brāhmaṇ strangers on the other. It is the Great Vṛātya who proposes that immediately after the conversion ritual is concluded, and as a part of it in fact, there should be a Rājasūya consecration of himself, now the greatest of Aryans, as the suzerain Emperor of all Aryan peoples and lands. It is a ceremony with which his people

are familiar though it is naturally unknown in Aryan land where they have no crowned rulers, and it would, if held with due pomp and ceremony, strike the imagination of his subjects as no mere *Vrātyastoma*, a foreign rite practised for the first time in these regions, is likely to do.

There thus comes to pass, after due advertisement and preparations in which the co-operation of every order and caste is enlisted, a *sattra* or *yajña* the like of which, in magnificence and impressiveness, had not been witnessed in either Aryan or Vrātya land within the memory of man.

Is it to be wondered at that such a ceremony should leave behind it reminiscences which induce a Court chronicler of a later age (now thoroughly Brāhmaṇised, if not a Brāhmaṇ himself) to describe it as the greatest of consecration ceremonies, the first ever held, to celebrate and sanctify the coronation of the first Imperial King of all Aryan land, adding thereto the poetical gloss that Prajāpati himself (a new admission, by the way, of Vrātya origin into the Vedic Pantheon) took upon himself the direction of this great *yajña*, and that the *ṛṣis*, the *devas* and every order of creatures in the universe came forward and willingly participated in this celebration ?

The Great Vrātya, the Eka-Vrātya of the Vrātya Book of the Atharva Veda, is no other than the Prthu Vainya of the Purāṇas, the first amongst the rulers of men who, according to the Harivaṃśa, was consecrated Ruler of the Earth (वृहवाधिप) at a Rājasūya. The following is the Vāyu Purāṇa account of the consecration ceremony to which my prose description given above scarcely does justice :

तं नद्यश्च समुद्रश्च रत्नान्यादाय सर्व्वशः ।  
 अभिषेकाय तोयं च सर्व्व एवोपतस्थिरे ॥  
 पितामहश्च भगवानङ्गिरोमि सहामरैः ।  
 स्थावराणि च भूतानि जङ्गमानि च सर्व्वशः ॥

समागम्य तदा वेण्यमभ्यषिञ्चन्नराधिपम् ।  
 महता राजराज्येन महाराजं महाद्युतिम् ॥  
 सोऽभिषिक्तो महाराजो देवैरङ्गिरसः सुतैः ।  
 आदिराजो महाराजः पृथुर्वैण्यः प्रतापवान् ॥

Vāyu Pur. 62, 130—133

[At this point the Paurāṇist chronicler of the Great-Vrātya Saga feels constrained to revert for a while to his original role of collector, commentator and co-ordinator of literary material from the Indo-Aryan literature for historical purposes :

European scholars have been deluded by the Aryanistic obsession to which I have drawn attention into the fundamental error of supposing that by the Conversion *Vrātyastoma* individual non-Vedic Aryans became Brāhmaṇs, or as the case may be, members of some other specific Aryan caste. Caste, I shall never grow tired of repeating, had not arrived when this *stoma* was invented ; and during the time it was in active operation this *stoma* was actually employed to increase the man-power of the settlement as a whole, that is of the *viś*. The admitted members, I conceive, individually took to or went on pursuing the profession which best suited their tastes and habits, without any let or hindrance from any quarter whatsoever.

They might even constitute themselves into an entirely new professional guild which the settlement had been without and their absorption into the *viś* might conceivably in some cases have had no other objective than the supply of such a specifically felt need of the community. I do not see that these scholars pay any very great compliment to the intelligence of these early settlers (and incidentally to their own) by assuming them to have been fanatical



fools, when to be fanatical fools would have meant extinction. Nor would these settlers have been able to make the great contribution they in later times did in the production of one of the most unique civilizations of the world, if they had not possessed a plastic intelligence, able to seize and utilize opportunities as they offered. The Brāhmaṇs were not in the beginning, and for long long ages to follow, the Pharisees they unfortunately came to be in later times. It needed circumstances of a very special nature to pervert the bulk of the descendants of a highly intelligent breed of organisers and statesmen into the most downright kind of scribes and pedants known to history.

Dr. Caland is mystified to find that the Conversion *Vrātyastoma* in the Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, an *ekāha* like the other *Vrātyastomas*, makes a necessity of the *gr̥hapati*, who is usually called for only in the case of a *sattra*, as for instance in the Great Sixtyone Days' Sattra described in PB XXIV. 18, which the introductory texts state was first performed by the Deva Vrātyas with Budha as their *sthapati* (*gr̥hapati*). The simple explanation is that this was a group-ceremony; and a *gr̥hapati* or *sthapati* was a necessity to represent the group, which might be a family, a tribe or a whole people even. The other *stomas* were meant for the reclamation or restoration to communion of individuals, and hence no *gr̥hapati* or *sthapati* is mentioned in their connection except in the later literature of the Sūtras when the Conversion *stoma* had ceased to be practised and the very object of that *stoma* had been forgotten, and what was a real necessity in the case of that *stoma* was taken on into the other *stomas* owing to unintelligent borrowing from the traditional description of an allied ceremony going by the same name. We shall presently observe other instances of unintelligent



borrowing in other directions also, all connected with the *Vrātyastomas*.<sup>15</sup>

Though an *ekāha*, the Conversion *Vrātyastoma* was also a *sattra*, if to have a *grhapati* marked a ceremony off as a *sattra*. It certainly had the distinction of a *sattra* in this case. Where was this great *ekāha-sattra* performed? Was it at Giribraja which was seen to be the capital city of Magadha in Jarāsandha's time? The country undoubtedly included Magadha, as I shall demonstrate when I analyse the Vrātya Book of the Atharva Veda. It must also have included the Anūpadeśa and extended up to the Vindhya range in the south, if the Prthu-Vaiṇya legend is taken to be, as I believe it is, a Paurāṇic rendering of the great event. The Anūpadeśa certainly included Aṅga and probably also comprised Kaśī and Videha and perhaps also Kośala.

And the result? The whole population of this extensive area, consisting as I have said of a conglomeration of different castes and peoples, became through the magic power of this Brāhmaṇic *ekāha-sattra*, as though at one stroke, an Aryan *viś*, and the whole country was transformed into a part, and much the greater part indeed of Āryāvarta, so that the centre of gravity of this Neo-Aryanism all at once swung to the East. There is evidence, otherwise unintelligible, of a missionary movement rolling westward.

<sup>15</sup> There is another alternative explanation which I would have considered quite admissible if I had not come across these other instances of unintelligent adaptation. That explanation is that the second, third and fourth *Vrātyastomas* were adapted and altered to serve when needed the purpose of the first by including in them the institution of a *sthapati* for the very appreciable advantage such an adaptation would mean Brāhman in the way of *dakṣiṇās*, the original aversion to pollution by the sins of the converts' unregenerate state having by then worn off by use and wont or having, as was more likely, been gotten over by the sophistry of doctrinal rationalisation.

Converted Vrātyas of Kuruland, it will be seen, cannot be restrained by their own fathers from going out to Pāñchāla to proselytise and convert the Vrātyas of that principality, only to find again that they had been forestalled there already by a Vrātya *anūchāna* of that place.<sup>16</sup> There is evidence in the Upaniṣads and elsewhere of a Devaki-putra Kṛṣṇa (see Chhandogya Up. III. 17.6.) taking lesson in the Neo-Aryanism of the Atharva Veda under Ghora, an Āngirasa. The tables are completely turned. The Pañchanad, the home of the original Aryan settlements, comes to be regarded in the altered perspective as the home of Vrātya barbarianism ! The Bāhikas, the Madrakas, the Āraṭṭas, for all they observe some undoubtedly Aryan practices and because they do not follow those or all those that came to be regarded as orthodox in Kuru-Pāñchāla under the New Dispensation, or because they follow others that are not approved in this latter country at this date, are abused as Vrātyas, in the Mahābhārata by (of all persons) Karna, a Sūta, and even so, Śalya, the King of the Madrakas is scarcely able to put up more than a half-hearted defence !

All Vedic scholars are agreed that the centre of gravity of Vedic Aryanism did in fact and reality pass from the Pañchanad eastward, over the Sarasvatī, and that the "Redaction of the Vedas" took place subsequently to that event. These and other quite legitimate findings have to be given their appropriate settings in a new historical perspective, if my hypothesis has not overshot its mark.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Baudhāyana Śranta Sūtra XVIII. 26. It is more fully dealt with *infra*.

<sup>17</sup> Upon this point, I need only give Weber's views which have been generally accepted. According to him, from the internal evidence furnished by the Ṛk-mantras, "Indian people appear in the most

And, be it marked, noted, and recorded here that caste, according to that hypothesis, entered into the Aryan world and into the Aryan scheme of life through the back-door of this great *ekāha-sattra*.

Now to go back to the Great Vrātya and his Court ]

I can now picture the most intelligent amongst the visiting Aryan Brāhmaṇs being installed in the position of the King's Chancellor (Purohit). He has already

ancient of the texts to be settled on the bank of the Indus, divided into a number of small tribes, in a state of mutual hostility, leading a patriarchal life as husbandmen and nomads." "There are no castes as yet, the people is still one united whole and bears but one name that of *viśas*, settlers." He then imagines an eastward mass-migration to Hindustan. "The connection," he continues, "with the ancestral home on the Indus remained of course at first a very close one; later on, however, when the new Brāhmaṇical organisation was completely consolidated in Hindustan, a strong element of bitterness was infused into it since the Brāhmaṇs looked upon their own (that is to say, Western) kinsmen who had remained true to the customs of their forefathers as apostates and unbelievers." "It was", according to him, "at the period when the Brāhmaṇical hierarchy was fully developed, when the Kośala-Videhas and Kuru-Pāñchūlas (who are to be regarded as having been specially instrumental in effecting it) were in their prime," that the Redaction of the *ṛk-mantras* took place. It is to explain this change of venue that he assumes a mass-emigration of the Aryan people from the Indus across the Sarasvatī towards the Ganges. Having made this assumption, he seeks to discover its cause. "Was it," he asks himself, "the pressure brought about by the arrival of new settlers? Was it excess of population? Or, was it only the longing for the beautiful tracts of Hindustan? Or perhaps, all these causes combined?" (I refrain from quoting the sentence which follows, because it is a palpable misreading of the extraordinarily interesting and suggestive legend of Videgha Māthava narrated in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, which I deal with in its proper place later. See Weber, History of Indian Literature, Popular Edition, pp 34, 37-39. I do not also accept his mass-emigration hypothesis, which too I shall have occasion to notice later.

remarked upon his Royal Master's contempt for all forms and ceremonies of religion, Vedic or the local (which, for reasons which I shall not keep back from my readers much longer, I shall hereafter frequently designate as Ātharvanic). He has also already sampled his Master's love for theological and cosmogonic speculation, and it does not take him long to discover, behind what appeared at first to be a royal hobby, a very firm hold over a body of doctrines, as original as they are attractive, and in breadth, freedom and sweep unlike anything he had heard dreamed of or even imagined in his own native settlement of resounding *yajñas* and *sattras*. The Purohit inevitably becomes his *yajmāna's* pupil, and together they often explore that moving *El Dorado* of great thoughts and mighty conceptions of which his Royal Master held the key, the magic world of the Upaniṣads.

Besides possessing a specially acute and highly receptive intellect, the Purohit, by the grace of *Brahman*, happens to be endowed also with a talent for rhapsodical compositions which in his native land obtained for its happy possessor the title of *ṛṣi* (seer).

There comes now an occasion when the poet-priest feels within himself the inspiration to hymn the wonderful attributes of the marvellous personality he has discovered in his Master, the incomparable Eka-Vrātya. It is thus that the first Ātharvanic Royal Purohit to the first Consecrated Vrātya-Aryan Emperor has the impulse to compose that extraordinary mosaic of poetry and truth (*Wahreit und Dichtung*) which he has left to the world as the Vrātya Book of the Atharva Veda ; and it is to this poet-priest again, no doubt, that the world has cause to be thankful for leaving to it an even more massive composition in the same epic strain, the celebrated Bhauma Sūkta of the Atharva Veda (AV XII. 1) in which the world (Pṛthivī) of the Eka-Vrātya

is pictured as even the Purāṇas have not been able to portray the Pṛthivī ruled by Vaiṇya-Pṛthu. It is without doubt or question the same Pṛthivī. Equally without doubt or question must the name of the Eka-Vrātya (if one must needs be given him) be Pṛthi or Pṛthu Vaiṇya.



## Section VI

### Analysis of the Vrātya Book.

#### Net results of the Great Conversion-Consecration Ceremony.

To European scholars, the Vrātya Book of the Atharva-Veda, AV Book XV (which, whatever else it may mean, does appear on the face of it quite naively and undisguisedly to extol and adore the "Unbeliever,"<sup>1</sup> has been a very citadel of puzzles. They have endeavoured to penetrate this stronghold of unsolved enigmas from every direction, only to come back baffled after each attempt. Not only is no agreement to be met with amongst the respective theories and hypotheses that have been propounded in their writings, the same author is seen to be at variance with himself. I choose Bloomfield's as an example ; and I do this in the full consciousness and faith that Bloomfield's analysis of the Atharva-Veda is one of the most striking examples of mature scholarship, joined with the exercise of an acute and sympathetic judgment,

<sup>1</sup> "Unbeliever" has been a name of evil repute in Europe, as in India, since religious bigotry took possession of peoples' minds in either country. In neither, has it relaxed its hold sufficiently yet to enable writers and scholars of the present day to place themselves in the detached mental condition of the Brāhmaṇ priest-poet who has been credited in the previous Section with the authorship of the Vrātya Book.

It is interesting to note that the term "Vrātya" which in the Vrātya Book is made to stand for all that is praiseworthy and exalted and which in the heyday of *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma* comes as unequivocally to signify the abominated unbeliever and outcaste still offers itself to Upaniṣadists of this later age as the most fitting to designate the *samśkāra*-less-ness of the transcendent soul. *Praśna Up. II. 11* :

"ब्राह्म्यस्त्वं प्राणैर्कर्षिता विश्वस्य सत्पतिः ।"

the general soundness of which stands in no need whatever of certification by me. My criticisms of the particular passage which I am going to extract, for illustrative purposes only, are not to be taken to minimise in the slightest degree my appreciation of the obligations I owe to his brief masterpiece of a hundred and twenty four pages,<sup>19</sup> which to students of Vedic literature is literally worth its weight in gold. Of the Vrātya Book (Book XV) of the Atharva Veda, Bloomfield says :

“ There can be no doubt that the theme is in reality Brahṁā but section 5 which introduces the *mūrties* of Rudra shows it to be under Sivaitic influence. The Vrātya (Vrātina) seems to be a kind of Brahmachārīn or at any rate one who has entered the Brāhmaṇical community after having been converted from an Aryan but non-Brāhmaṇical tribe. This is the theme of the so called *Vrātyastoma*, described specially in the Śrauta books of the SV (PB XVII 1 ; LŚ 8. 6). These rites make it possible for an unholy half-savage community to become Brāhmaṇs. The connection between the Vrātya Book and the *Vrātyastoma* is not to be questioned : in XV. 2, the statement that faithi has become his paramour, holy words (*mantras*) his Māgadha (outcaste associate) clearly refers to the conversion of the Vrātya ; the occurrence of such words as *uṣṇāsa*, *pratoda* and *vipatha* in AV XV 2 as well as PB XVII 1. 14 clinches the connection still further. The Vrātya having become holy through his acquired *brahmacharyam* is emphatically the representative of Brahṁā ; like the Brahmachārīn (XI 5) he is apotheosised. The mention of a large number

<sup>19</sup> The Atharva Veda and the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa. By Maurice Bloomfield. Encyclopedia of Indo-Aryan Research, Vol. II, Part I B.

of sāmāns in the book seems to point to some sort of connection with the schools of the Sāma Veda. The contents are too abstruse and too absurd for analysis." (P. 94).

That a writer of Bloomfield's scientific acumen should in the course of so short a passage have made himself responsible for such a multitude of facile assumptions and exaggerations has appeared to me to be a greater enigma than any to be met with in the Vrātya Book itself. I have underlined all the statements which have struck me as unsound, though for my present purpose I need notice only some of them.<sup>20</sup>

The contents of the Vrātya Book are neither abstruse nor absurd. Compared with many other portions of the Atharva Veda it appears to me to be quite perspicuous in meaning and intention and as admitting of the most illuminating explanation and analysis. This analysis and explanation I shall now attempt.

20 Two of the statements, namely, that the convert must originally have been an Aryan and that he became after conversion a Brāhmaṇ, I have dealt with already. To speak of "Śivaitic influences" determining the contents of a Sūkta of the Atharva Veda is an extreme instance of the common error of putting the cart before the horse. It is quite true however that "Rudra," for all that the name is borrowed from the Rg Veda, is a non-Vedic-Aryan deity whom the Vedic Pantheon of later days took over from amongst the gods who were worshipped in the Eastern Vrātya land. Also the sāmāns no more belonged exclusively to the schools of the Sāma Veda than did the ṛchas to the schools of the Rg Veda or the yajur texts to those of the Yajur Veda. Therefore to cite sāmāns in large numbers (or small) is no proof at all that the person citing must have had "some sort of connection with the schools of the Sāma Veda." I have, for instance, no connection with the schools of Bloomfield or Weber though I have been citing them repeatedly. Again, Vrātyas and Vrātīnas were by no means identical entities. The other statements will be dealt with expressly or by necessary implication in the pages to follow.

In the first Paryāya, the Vrātya, the subject of the psalmody, is said to have stirred up (by the power of prayer, it must be understood) Prajāpati, and the Prajāpati he has stirred up is seen by him as *Brahman*, Īśāna, Mahādeva (texts 1-5). In plain prose this means that the Vrātya was a worshipper of the great new Deities who, taken over no doubt from the religious beliefs of the Vrātya Rājanyas of the East, have now got added to the Vedic Pantheon (a point which will need further elucidation), and that through such worship he has attained the knowledge of the highest of Divinities, the *Brahman* within himself<sup>21</sup>; and is in other words, a *brahmavid*. Naturally, therefore, it is a *Brahmavūlin* (text 8) who bears witness to what is stated in texts 6 to 8, namely, that through the power obtained by his worship of these gods and his knowledge of *Brahman*, he (the Vrātya, not Prajāpati as the scholars would have it) overcomes domestic and foreign foes and becomes Eka-Vrātya, the sole ruler (sole ruler in the secular sense, that is to say) of the Vrātya world.

His physical conquests thus outlined, the second Paryāya goes on to portray his spiritual triumphs. The gods and the *sāmāns* accompany the *brahmavid* (एवं विद्वांसं) Vrātya as he moves about from quarter to quarter. This trick of allegory by which the Vedic Pantheon and the other Vedic institutions are made to serve the *brahmavid* is worked to death in the Āraṇyakas of the Brāhmaṇas and in the literature of Upaniṣads as a whole. But the technique is by no means confined to this particular field; for, as Bloomfield has observed, the Vedic Pantheon is brought down and made to participate in even the common peoples'

<sup>21</sup> The *Brahman* so conceived is of course the soul not only of himself but of the whole universe, the *Ātman* which is the active principle of the universe and the *Brahman* within the self, immanent in and transcending both.



customs and superstitions not only in the Atharva Veda but also in the ritual practices dealt with in the Grhya Sūtras. But the most remarkable passages in this Prayāya are those in which, in a like vein, the poet-priest describes certain other more or less abstract conceptions as well as several attributes of nature as following the Vrātya in his progressions as though they were his पुञ्चली (harlot) and Māgadha. These descriptions fix the Great Vrātya's seat unequivocally in the country of Magadha. The apparently inseparable association of the Vrātya with the Māgadha will come up for separate treatment. The Puṁśchalī association may be disposed of at once. Even in the late days of the Mahābhārata, Magadha is still spoken of as the great country for this institution ; for Karna, the Sūta King of Aṅga (and who should know better ?) is found offering as reward for services demanded श्यामा (nut-brown ?) Māgadhi slave-girls decked and trained in music and other like accomplishments (Mahābhā. Karna 38.7,18). Throughout the Indo-Aryan land, in the days of the Mahābhārata, *hetaerae* appear as a public institution, accompanying Royalty in all State progressions and taking an ornamental part in all State ceremonies. Scholars with Aryan proclivities may take heart from my assurance that the Vrātya Book and the Mahābhārata between them furnish no justification for claiming the Puṁśchalī as a Vedic Aryan institution. It is Vrātya, that is to say, indigenous Indian in origin, and not a Vedic Aryan importation. I ought not to part with this Prayāya, without specifically noting that descriptions of conceptual peregrinations by the King in the several quarters (दिशः) in similar style becomes a part of the Rājasūya ceremony as described in the Brāhmaṇas (Śatapatha V 4. 1).

A variety of other powers and objects are made to serve the Vrātya in similar style up to the end of the



6th Paryāya. The 8th and 9th Paryāyas take in the Great Vrātya's socio-political environment, the nobility, the tribe, the kinsmen, the assembly, the gathering, the army (food and drink, very properly, not being excluded)

Paryāyas 10 to 13 are distinct from the rest of the Book in being barefaced propaganda aimed at reconciling the Aryan tribal chiefs to the benign hegemony of the Aryanised Vrātya Imperial King. That important business being disposed of to the complete satisfaction apparently of the psalmist, the account slides back again into allegory in the previous vein in Paryāya 14, tailing off finally in the remaining Paryāyas (in a somewhat Xanaduesque *finale*) into downright incantation and nonsensicality.

I can discern no enigma or puzzle whatever in the Vrātya Book any more than in the Brahmachārin psalmody<sup>22</sup> (AV XI. 5). Neither the Vrātya nor the Brahmachārin is "apotheosised." They are both glorified in a way later made commonplace in the Upaniṣad literature, as *brahmanvits* in *esse* and in *posse*.

I should not, I feel, leave the Vrātya Book without a specific reference to the contents of the 6th Paryāya inasmuch as these provide valuable links to connect the Atharva Veda, and in particular the XVth Book thereof, with other literature. Here, as in the 2nd Paryāya, the theme is the Vrātya's progressions (allegorical, of course) in the several दिग्गः; but the attendants he picks up are : (1) Earth, fire, herbs, forest-trees, plants. (2) Right and truth, sun, moon and the asterisms. (3) The verses (*ṛchas*), chants (*sāmans*) sacrificial formulae (*yajurs*) and the *brahman* (Atharva *mantras*). (4) The Itihāsas, the Purāṇas, the Gāthās, the Nārāśansīs. (5) Fires and offerings. (6) The months, seasons, the *lokas*. (7) The deities, male and female,

<sup>22</sup> As to which, see *infra*, Section XIII.

and *virāj* (dominion). Everyone of these enumerations is followed by the familiar formula of the Āraṇyakas of later days, namely : "of these he becomes the abode who knoweth thus (यः एवं वेद)," the underlying idea of course being that all that ever was dreamed of as attainable by other means, whether prescribed by the Vedas or not, and everything else desirable, with the power to control and command, are attainable by the *brahman* in the same way that they were attained by the Vratya subject of the psalmody. (In Paryāya 2 occurs another familiar variant of the formula : एवं विद्वांसं ; it is applied to the Eka Vratya himself, and has to be read with texts 6 to 8 of Paryāya 1). The Vratya Book in this way is not political propaganda only on behalf of the Eka Vratya ; it also preaches his theosophic doctrines for the benefit apparently of the same audience, the Vedic Aryan world. The palpable subordination of everything Vedic to these doctrines, at the same time that no trick of language and allegory is left untried which would link Vedic Aryan ideas and concepts with them, would be inconceivable except on the part of a Brāhmaṇ author placed in the situation I have placed him. This characteristic Upaniṣadic technique is later on played almost to exhaustion in the Āraṇyakas. The progress (in literature) of the Upaniṣadic theosophy from the start it obtained in the Atharva Veda, through the Āraṇyakas, to the free Upaniṣads shows three well-marked stages : (1) Linking of the Vedic doctrines, in quite a superficial manner and in a relation of complete subordination, to the Upaniṣadic. (2) The inculcation of the view that the unmeaning performance of Vedic practices (इष्टापूर्त) by the *svarga-kāma* brings in but the poorest of rewards, which the *brahman* seeking to be one with the *Brahman* cannot regard with anything but contempt. (3) That the desire for the Vedic *svarga* and more so its attainment are serious

hindrances to the attainment of the Upaniṣadic *summum bonum*, since the attainment of material happiness in any degree only creates a desire for more of it which, so long as it remains unattained, causes misery and incites the subject once more to mean strivings for its attainment, and so on *ad infinitum* ; wherefore, counsels the *brahmavid*, the path to true happiness lies through *nibṛtti* (complete renunciation) and not in the perpetual hankering after the Vedic *svarga* or indeed after anything else mundane or super-mundane. It would, in my judgment, have been impossible for the doctrines of the Upaniṣads to have sprung into being in this shape and to have followed this course had they had to be conceived in the very womb of Vedic Aryanism. The Upaniṣads and Vedic Aryanism are different *genera* altogether, with no traceable blood-connection between them. And this is not all. Doctrines which are covertly condemnatory (from their very birth) of Aryan religious beliefs and practices and which end by being positively denunciatory of them are all throughout allowed by the Brāhmaṇs themselves to repose upon the Vedas as their very crown and summit (Vedānta)! Such a miraculous occurrence presupposes one and only one origin : The Upaniṣadic doctrines grew up independently and away from all contacts with the Vedic Aryans, and in the brains of the Vrātya Rājanyas ; and that further these doctrines found their Constantine, at the very first moment of their contact with Vedic Aryanism, in the *brahmavid* Eka Vrātya, nobly seconded in this no doubt by able and sincerely appreciative Brāhmaṇ pupils and co-adjutors. Nominally, the Vrātya and his people became converts to Aryanism. In fact and truth, and as concerned the domain of opinions, ideas, doctrines and beliefs, it was the Brāhmaṇ missionaries who were converted to Upaniṣadic theosophy and became in turn the missionary

preachers of this Neo-Aryanism which subordinated the faith and beliefs of the Aryan Brāhmaṇs (a matter chiefly of *mantras* and rituals) to the theosophic faith and doctrines of the Eastern Vrātya Rājanyas. The repeatedly affirmed statement, found in the Brāhmaṇ-made literature of the Āraṇyakas, that the knowledge of these doctrines was originally esoteric amongst the Rājanyas, to whom (for obtaining access to this knowledge) Brāhmaṇs versed to the saturation-point in the knowledge of the Vedas had to go to school (*samid* in hand) would be utterly incomprehensible except on the above supposition.<sup>23</sup>

Paryāya 7 returns to the Vrātya himself. His greatness, the first text says, "becomes sessile, goes to the ends of the earth and becomes ocean". One must allow for poetic exaggerations, even in reference to the Eka Vrātya of the psalmody, and the statement must be taken to have been a highly coloured one. But a successor came in the fulness of time upon his throne in reference to whom at any rate the statement appears to have been prophetic. The greatness of Aśoka, a *brahmaid* Eka Vrātya, if ever there was one, not only spread to the ocean but even overpassed it.

I hope I shall be found to have not unsatisfactorily accounted for all the statements I have underlined in the extract from Bloomfield with which I opened my treatment of the Vrātya Book, except the one which concerns the Māgadha. This too I hope to account for in the same way in its proper context.

<sup>23</sup> The argument is further pursued in the next Section.



## Section VII

### Concerning Methodology ;

### Or, the Palaeontology of History.

It is necessary at this stage that I should define with precision the nature of the task I have taken upon myself and the method I am employing to solve it.

The task is the recovery of lost history, lost beyond recovery or recall so far as written narratives go, for the record of any kind of writing left by the people whose history has to be recovered began when all this history as a whole had been over and done with ; and the writers of this record and of those that followed did not realise the necessity and had no notion at all of reducing into writing the events that had happened, even assuming that the events themselves had survived in living memory in a condition which admitted of their reproduction as history.

But this written literature contains fossil deposits from earlier event-strata. What recovery can be made must be made on the strength of these dislodged fossil data. The investigation is archaeological or palaeontological in character (the latter much more than the former), the material being literary material.

The digging out, from these written records, of indubitable fossil historical material is the first and by far the most important part of this work. The next step is to trace each fossil to the original stratum to which it was organically related and from which it had been dislodged,



and to indicate, if possible, the forces or currents which caused it to be carried and embedded in the environment in which it is found but to which it did not organically belong. In general, the displaced deposit is unerringly recognised by its incongruity (the more complete the better) with the environment in which it is discovered. I am afraid that, broadly speaking, not only is there no general appreciation amongst scholars of the value of literary incongruities ; the common tendency is to discount them as "freaks" or inconsequentialities.

Such data are found embedded in not inconsiderable quantities in the Vedic and Paurāṇic literatures. The whole *Ṛgveda* literature is a very museum of fossil deposits which can be pieced together and made to tell a quite connected story. The Atharva Veda, on the other hand, is a bed very rich in fossils drawn from quite a number of different more or less contemporary sources. A recent material, again, found in an apparently old stratum may tell as good history as the reverse : Witness, for example, the *Puruṣasūkta* of the *Ṛgveda* (Rv. X 90) and the very last *Sāmmanasya Sūkta* of the same Veda (X 191) amongst others, of which use will be made later. Let us call these "negative fossils," fossils with the *minus* sign, since they are just as tell-tale as the normal variety.

The statements found several times repeated in the *Brāhmaṇas* that the *Upaniṣad* doctrines were originally esoteric amongst the *Kṣatriyas* is of historical value only on account of its incongruity (this I have shown) ; and the same remark applies to the manner in which these doctrines are found disposed as the crown and summit of the Vedas in the *Śrauta* literature, in spite of their scarcely disguised uncongeniality with and later more openly advertised hostility to and even contempt for all *Śrauta* notions and practices.

But fossils like these tell no tale to the investigator without imagination ; and the imagination to be productive of real history has to be both plentiful and "parsimonious"<sup>24</sup> at one and the same time. But to dismiss tell-tale incongruities such as I have mentioned as casual slips and inconsequentialities shows, to my mind, a total lack of scientific imagination, besides lack of judgment. The highly self-disserving statement occurring again and again in Brāhmaṇ-made literature acknowledging the Kṣatriya copyright in the basic material of the Vedānta has been actually dismissed by scholars of repute on the ground that the statement is lacking in proof !

The whole of this literature is of set policy and purpose self-laudatory. In legal proceedings, self-laudatory statements are never as a rule accepted as evidence unless they have been tested by cross-examination and other related safeguards. Self-disserving statements on the other hand are taken to prove themselves and to carry their own hall-mark of veracity. This is not law only, but very sound sense. Every statement derogatory to Brāhmaṇical pretensions occurring in this advisedly self-laudatory Brāhmaṇ-made literature is invaluable as evidence.

The statement several times repeated, and in varying contexts, assigning the authorship of the basic Vedānta doctrines to the Kṣatriyas not only proves itself but proves more than it actually says. It affirms that the doctrines were originally confined within the Kṣatriya order. If the reference be taken to be to the Kṣatriyas of the Aryan *viśas*, this last affirmation would be incredible because of its utter impossibility, if not also of its incomprehensibility.

<sup>24</sup> The "law of parsimony" in science is, that assumptions must not overpass their necessity and should be limited to the necessity. It must not be random and wild speculation.

The Brāhmaṇs and the Kṣatriyas in the Aryan *viśas* were not even separate castes yet. They were holders of offices, and the same family might supply holders of both kinds of offices. There is no evidence that the Kṣatriyas in any *viś* constituted a kind of masonic guild all by themselves. In religious matters, the lives of all and every member of the community lay as an open book before the officiating Brāhmaṇs. And the statement to be credible with reference to the Aryan Kṣatriyas would have to presuppose the existence of a super-organised free-masonry amongst the Kṣatriyas of the entire Aryan land, to whatever separate *viś* units they might have belonged, and the maintenance too (as a closely guarded secret institution) of this widely diffused free-masonry, for generations on end, until particular Brāhmaṇs by special favour, in a somewhat light-hearted manner, were let into these secret doctrines which thus became all at once public property, whereupon that highly organised and incredibly perfect ancient masonic institution collapsed through sheer lack of a *raison d'être*.

If the statement in question be true, as it must be, it must refer to the Vrātya Rājanyas of the East who, as I have indicated, did form a separate order, a close-knit caste which kept the other castes, even their bard-priests, at a respectable distance. The analogy furnished by the inner lives of the consuls, censors and other high officials of the Roman Republican Empire must therefore fail at this point unless the existence should be assumed in Rome also of conditions which can be supposed to have existed in the Eastern Vrātya-land alone. The Kṣatriyas of the Aryan settlements did not live in any kind of water-tight compartment and could not even do so. The Rājanyas of the Vrātya country both could and did.

In the conditions obtaining in the Vrātya country of Magadha and the Anūpadeśa, the high esoteric religious philosophy of the Rājanyas had to remain esoteric, if for no other reason than because the rest of the population were, in literal fact, intellectually unfit to receive instruction in it.

The general population was sunk in superstition, and the officiating priests, the Sūtas and the Māgadhas, were no better than mere vendors of spells and charms. This picture of conditions prevailing in Vrātya land is, I submit, borne out to the letter by the contents of the Atharva Veda, made alive and communicative by the application of the scientific historic imagination. The Atharva Veda presents in fact a whole bed of *contemporary* fossil deposits which it does not need much scientific imagination to weave together into coherent, credible and substantially true history.<sup>25</sup>

The Purāṇas too disclose similar deposits of incongruous material, all of singular historical worth. Such will be found in most of the references to the Sūta and the Māgadha, and of these I am making the fullest use. Draupadi's marriage with the five Pāṇḍavas, and almost every item said and recorded of Kṛṣṇa, his kith and kin and of the Yādava confederacy (save for passages which are self-condemned exaggerations or meant only for his deification), in particular the incidents and statements which show him up as riding roughshod after the manner of a Napoleon over all contemporary notions of morality and propriety are, for the same reason, of bed-rock historical value. And every reference to Magadha and every statement bearing on that country and its institutions, I have tested and found to be for historical purposes extremely

<sup>25</sup> See Sections IX and X *infra*.



valuable. The Purāṇa material has been mercilessly Brāhmaṇised for propaganda purposes to points far exceeding those to which that process had been carried or had even been found necessary to be carried in treating the materials of the Atharva Veda. The recovery of the latter thus presents fewer difficulties than the recovery of the original Paurāṇic historical and saga material. But I consider it quite feasible, nevertheless, to recover what I may designate as the original Draupadī Saga from out of the highly Brāhmaṇised version of the Kuru-Pāṇḍava feud as it is found presented in the extant Mahābhārata. It will be a fine exercise, and I propose to attempt it in the concluding Section, just to see what kind of a trail may be blazed by pioneer work in this yet uncharted field. It will have to be made by others if not by me; and I propose to do it less for the sake of the substantial results expected to be immediately achieved than for the purpose of developing methods of enquiry which in the circumstances appear to be the best calculated for recovering lost history. I hope, too, that the results actually obtained by this pioneer effort on my part will prove to be not altogether devoid of intrinsic value and interest.

For the present, I desire to be forgiven for this digression into Methodology, a subject which in the circumstances outlined cannot be otherwise regarded than as being of prime importance for the kind of investigation with which this book is concerned.



## Section VIII

### Identity of the Worlds of Pṛthu-Vainya

#### And of the Eka-Vrātya.

I have tried to visualise the Eka-Vrātya as the Prince of *brahmavids* and as the Emperor of a world of far larger dimensions and of a wider horizon than the world of the Aryan *viśas* which I had previously depicted. His *virāj* (dominion), we have seen, extends to the ocean. The Vrātya Book has preferred not unduly to emphasise or particularise the physical background of the Great Vrātya to the prejudice of his other aspects and attributes. But this physical setting in all the magnificence of its sweep and the richness of its details is supplied in another great psalmody of which the subject is Bhūmi or Pṛthivī (Book XII 1), one of the finest conceived in literature. The Great Vrātya's Empire was not confined, as were most of the Aryan principalities, within an area of a few hundred square miles which could be covered by a *vipatha* <sup>26</sup> in a day or two at most.

<sup>26</sup> The *vipatha*, I need hardly remind the reader, is the ramshackle car which forms one of the equipments of the Vrātya *grhapati* in the *Vrātyastoma* for conversion, described in the *Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* (XVII 1.) The Śrauta doctors, Śāṇḍilya and Dhānāñjaya, discourse learnedly upon what kind of a vehicle this was, not apparently having seen a *vipatha* themselves, but agree that it was a rather shaky contraption, the shakiness being imparted to it by the perverse composition or character of the animals employed to draw it! Lātyāyana, apparently drawing from observed data, says it was प्राच्यरथो नास्तीति विपथः (VIII 6. 9-11) and this has been understood to mean a vehicle of Eastern

It is a world which is familiar with the Sūta (hailing from Aṅga) as one of the *rājakṛts* (king-makers, AV III 5. 7) and the Māgadha as a close associate of the King. It not only includes Aṅga and Magadha but has its centre of gravity depending in the East, beyond (that is to say) the river Sadānīrā of the Videgha Māthava legend of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (I 4. 1. 10-17), which at its time separated Videha from Kośala and which (*pace* Sāyana) could not possibly be the Karatoya of our day which borders on Bogra <sup>27</sup> This world might very well have also included Videha and Kośala, and possibly the whole of the Anūpadeśa of the Pṛthu Vaiṇya legend of the Purāṇas with the Sarasvatī as its western boundary. In the literature of the Atharva Veda, the tiger (the most distinctive inhabitant of the Anūpadeśa) who is never once mentioned in the R̥gVeda competes with the lion and even prevails over him as a familiar literary figure ; but he is more than only a literary figure, for it is on the skin of this King of the eastern Indian forests, the terror of men and beasts in those parts, and on it only that the consecration of the King can take place (AV IV 8. 2). When this amongst other *rājakarmāṇi*, borrowed from the Atharva Veda or other like Vrātya sources, the Brāhmaṇ priesthood find themselves constrained to Brāhmaṇise ("rishify," in Bloomfield's happy characterisation) for incorporation

make suited for progression over bad roads. वशिकपथः which Pṛthu is credited with having made apparently admitted of being traversed by this kind of springless vehicles, as a rule. The *vipatha* and *uṣṇisa* are both mentioned along with the Māgadha and the Puṃśchali in the Second Paryāya of the Vrātya Book (*vide* extract from Bloomfield at p. 45 *supra*).

<sup>27</sup> This legend comes up for detailed examination in Section XIV *infra*.

into their table of hieratic *sattras* and *yajñas*, they do it tiger's skin and all.<sup>23</sup>

The Pṛthivī (Bhūmi) of the Atharva Veda (allowing of course for poetical exaggerations) has expanded in all directions, touching the heavens above and the ocean around. The world of the *Pañchamānavas* of *yajñas* and *kratus*, of *ṛsis* and *ṛtvijas*, of *sattras* held in honour of Agni, Soma and Indra shrinks into parochial dimensions in comparison, for this is a world of tribes, assemblies, gatherings and armies, an earth again supporting on her broad, hospitable surface, places and peoples of different speeches and very varied local customs, an earth which the person into whose mouth the psalmody is put is made to claim that he has subdued and brought under his sole dominion. It is a Pṛthivī of very variegated geographical features : of *sindhus* (flowing rivers), oceans, steep ascents (उद्धत), heights (प्रवत) and plains (सम) ; and the wealth she places at the disposal of her children is not exhausted by the enumeration which the *Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* is led, in its most expansive of imaginative flights, to make (namely, where it describes the transformation in the Earth's productivity effected through the performance by Daiva Vrātyas of the Great Sixtyone Days' Sattra, Budha acting as *sthapati*, PB XXIV 18 : the *sattra* is said to have made the earth burst with milk, butter,

<sup>23</sup> The "tiger's skin" is not mentioned in the *Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, however, not only requires the *punarābhigēka* ceremony to be performed on it, it explains the reason as being that "the tiger is the *kṣatra* (royal power) amongst the beasts of the forest" (Ait. Br. VI 5. 32-33). The tiger's skin duly appears in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* account (Sat. Br. V 3. 5). But no *Brāhmaṇa* exhibits the process of "rishi-fication" in the making as well as the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*. Note particularly its invented mythology of the *mahābhigēka* of Indra by Prajāpati and the other gods (Ait. Br. VIII 3. 12-14).

flesh, herbs and trees). It is an earth guarding for her favoured children, in her secret recesses, gems, jewels, gold and treasure (निधि, वड्ड, मणि, हिरण्य). It is in fact the वसुन्धरा of Pṛthu Vainya of the Paurāṇic legend, the Emperor-patron of Sūtas and Māgadhas, the King for whom Prajāpati himself and the Ṛṣis volunteered to hold the consecrating *sattra*, of the Pṛthi or Pṛthu-Vainya of both the Purāṇas and the Atharva Veda, he who taught his subjects the art of agriculture (indicating no doubt thereby the staple industry of the Eastern Empire), a world again, be it also stated, of fevers and other plagues, of witches and warlocks, of gamblers and harlots, of man-eating tigers and venomous hamadryads, a world beset all round besides by demons and evil spirits who have to be constantly kept appeased or outwitted by the necromancer's art ; a world too abounding in sins, committed as well as uncommitted, and consequently abounding in the same measure with *prāyaścittiāni* which a priest-hood as superstitious as the people for whom they officiate feel constrained meticulously to provide to neutralise and cancel each conceivable variety of them, a world in short of dangers known and unknown, and the more fear-inspiring the less they are known and foreseeable.

But it was a world, at the same time, of great awe-inspiring Deities who appeared to have scarcely anything in common with the scattered hosts who composed the Vedic Pantheon, and in might and majesty as far above Indra, Agni, the Maruts, the Visvadevas and their like as the Eka-Vrātya himself appeared to be above the chieftains of the Aryan *viśas*.

It is a well-attested anthropological observation that people in societies which are still in the unsophisticated primitive stage as a rule make their gods after their governors. From the position which Varuṇa appears to



have held as the chief amongst the gods before the Vedic Aryans descended upon the plains of the Punjab (*primus inter pares*, but no autocrat), it can be inferred with some amount of confidence that they had left behind them conditions politically stabler and far less disturbed than what they found themselves thrown into in their new homes. It is easy also to understand how in this new environment the blusterer and bully of an Indra was able effectively to throw into the background, if not to supplant altogether, the benign and placid Varuṇa. There are indications that with the accession into Aryanism of the Eastern Vrātya country and the resulting shifting of the political centre of gravity to the East, there was a mild resuscitation of the Varuṇa cult. But in this Eastern country where, according to Kṛṣṇa's testimony, the rains never failed, Indra (his natural occupation being gone) sinks into a tricky voluptuary.<sup>29</sup> In this country too of intensified fecundity

<sup>29</sup> It is highly interesting in the present context to observe that, due no doubt to overpowering Ātharvāṇic influences, the Brāhmaṇa literature finds itself constrained to consecrate Indra at a Mahābhiṣeka ceremony (a super-Rājasūya) before it is able to accept him as Ruler of the gods, which he decidedly was not in the ṚgVeda, and that the effective *mantra* which is made available for this purpose is a *mantra* from the ṚgVeda I 25. 10, which bears on the acquisition of universal rule by Varuṇa. See Ait. Br. VIII 3. 12-14. The strong Ātharvāṇic influences under which this Brāhmaṇa (which is ṚgVedic by affiliation) was composed is apparent *inter alia* from the studied magnification of the importance to a King of the services of a Purohita which practically is the theme of the next two chapters (Ait. Br. VIII 4-5) and the special sections devoted to the Kuṇṭāpa Sāstra and the Aitaṣapralāpa. Ait. Br. VI 5. 32-33. This King-Purohita partnership is quite naturally the common theme in every species of what I have called "the post-concordat literature", namely, the Atharva Veda, the Brāhmaṇas and the Purāṇas. I should not be surprised if the ṚgVeda hymns which appear to attribute "royalty" to Indra and which bear on the King-Purohita partnership theme should be found by other tests to be late additions to that collection.



and death, the gods that count are the Great Vṛātya Gods who, as the case may be, originate, preserve or destroy all creatures living as well as non-living, Prajāpati, Viṣṇu, and Rudra-Īśāna-Mahādeva. There were, as indeed there could not but be, minor gods also in Vṛātya land. Like the Great Vṛātya and his people these too, it is noteworthy, have to obtain admission into Aryanism (into the Vedic Pantheon, that is) by a *Vṛātyastoma* ceremony (Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa XVII 1-2) But even Brāhmaṇic punctilio for forms and ceremonies for solemnising acts of high religious or social significance sees the absurdity of taking the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of the Universe itself into the scheme of things by *Vṛātyastoma*.<sup>30</sup> A general laudatory attribute which might be applied and was applied to any god when prayer was being addressed to him (प्रजापति), and names belonging to some quite minor Aryan deities (विष्णु, रुद्र)

<sup>30</sup> For all that however there are clear indications in the Purāṇa literature showing that the admission of even these Great Gods into the Vedic Pantheon was none too peaceful; Rudra (Mahādeva) at any rate is shown to have fought his way into the Vedic Pantheon. His marriage with the eldest daughter of Prajāpati Dakṣa by itself proves unavailing to secure him a place in this orthodox assemblage. Neither he nor his wife, Satī, is invited to Dakṣa's *yajña*. This angering Mahādeva the two fall to abusing and cursing each other. Out of the mutual recrimination which is reported to have taken place the following points emerge as the common case of both the parties: (i) Mahādeva Rudra has no place in the Vedic *svarga*, (ii) has no share also given to him in the sacrifices offered to the Suras. Mahādeva's apologia for this admitted state of things is significantly confirmatory of several aspects of my thesis. "He, Mahādeva, had been appointed by Parameṣṭhin to uphold the *Bhurloka*, the first created of all the *Lokas*, and it is right and fitting that he should not neglect that job for *svarga* for which he had no hankering. As to sharing with the Suras in the sacrificial offerings he had no mind to lose his caste sitting at the same feast with all four *varṇas* of Suras who ate together without any discrimination whatsoever! For his part, therefore, he preferred that prayers, hymns

whose functions without being very distinctive yet in a vague way were suggestive of the attributes of preservation and destruction are made to shoot up into exaggerated prominence, and the functions of the Great Vrātya Deities are simply assimilated with these names. Under stress of Upaniṣadic dialectic, the members of the Trinity later lose their individuality and merge in the *Ātman-Brahman* of the Vedānta (Prajāpati, during the progress of this movement, being specially designated as Brahmā to mark his pre-eminence within the Trinity itself). Popular religion as reflected in the Purāṇas adopted this Brahmā-Viṣṇu-Maheśvara scheme, and it has been the cardinal trait of current Hinduism to this day.

Mythology to order is such a trite feature of Brāhmaṇic exegetics, that to seek to discover some *rationale* behind any or all of them would ordinarily be lost labour. But as truth, it has been said, will out even in an affidavit, once in a while even such a mythology may indirectly reflect a historic movement. Such are the two Daiva Vrātya mythologies in PB. XVII 1. 1. and XXIV 18. 2. "The gods, forsooth" (runs Dr. Caland's translation of the

and oblations should be offered to him separately from this crowd. These and other arguments failing to convince Dakṣa, Mahādeva plays the very devil with the *yajña*. It is thus that Dakṣa the Prajāpati is coerced into recognising him as *gr̥hapati* and Īśvara; Brahmānda Pur. (Cal.) 31 (Bom) 13, Vāyu Pur. 30. The great Sāmmanasya Sūkta, the last of Maṇḍala X of the R̥g Veda, about which see Section XII *post*, it is clear from the above, must have been composed after the Daiva Vrātyas and Rudra-Īśāna-Mahādeva (as also, of course, Prajāpati and Viṣṇu) had succeeded in obtaining entry into the Vedic Pantheon (on their own terms apparently) under Vrātya Rājanya patronage.

The Purāṇas, it should be noted, make a special point of glorifying Rudra or Viṣṇu or both of them and this is one of the circumstances which bear out strongly the special relation in which, according to my thesis, the Purāṇas stand towards the Ātharvaṇic world,

former) went to the world of heaven ; of them the adherents of 'the God' <sup>31</sup> were left (on earth) leading a Vrātya life ( *व्रात्याम् प्रवसन्तः* <sup>32</sup> ). They came to the spot whence the gods had gone to the world of heaven. But they found neither that *stoma* nor that metre by means of which they might reach them. Then the gods said to the Maruts : 'Deliver ye to these that *stoma*, that metre by means of which they might reach us.' To them they (the Maruts) delivered that sixteen-versed *stoma*, (which) cryptically (is) the *anuṣṭubh*. Thereupon, they reached them." The same scholar's translation of the other text in PB XXIV 18 is as follows : "The Vrātyas, the adherents of 'the God,' held a sacrificial session with Budha as their *śhapati*. They consecrated themselves without having previously

<sup>31</sup> This is Dr. Caland's translation of *देवाः*, taking his cue from the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa, so that it would mean the adherents of Rudra-Īśāna, which would fit the texts into my scheme admirably. In the Baudhāyana text, the mythology is foisted on the *Sāvitṛīpatita stoma* and the expression used is *दैव्या व्रात्याः* । *तेन हैतेन मरुत इजिरे तेषाम् विष्णु स्थपतिरासाथो हैतेन दैव्या व्रात्या इजिरे तेषाम् बुधः सौम्य स्थपतिरास ।* What a mess Baudhāyana does make of the PB mythologies quoted !

<sup>32</sup> Dr Caland's rendering of *व्रात्याम् प्रवसन्तः* is obviously the right one. In the altered world of the Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra, however, when the admission of outsiders into the Indo-Aryan social order comes to be viewed as impossible if not also unthinkable, the Sūtra-kāra simply touches up the language of the Conversion *stoma* so as to make it fit into the existing scheme of things. In his hands, *व्रात्याम् प्रवसन्तः* becomes *व्रात्यानाम् प्रवासे* so that the *stoma* is made applicable to Indo-Aryans who have returned from sojourn in a Vrātya country, which must necessarily have involved lapses from orthodoxy and sins thereby incurred calling for expiation. The liberties the Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra (XXII 5. 4) takes with the language and intention of the *stoma* are thus not as blundering or irrational as are those taken in the Sūtras of Baudhāyana. The notion that sojourn in non-Brāhmanical countries has to be expiated for by *prāyaścāritas* of some kind or other, which still lingers in Hindu India, is traceable to this origin.

begged of King Varuṇa a place for divine worship (like what, according to Baudhāyana, the human *sthapati* of the Conversion *stoma* had to do of the राजनि ब्राह्मणे वा ). King Varuṇa cursed them : ‘I preclude you from a share in the sacrifice. Ye shall not know the path leading to the gods.’ Therefore, they (the others, other priests) do not take sacrificial substance (rice, barley, etc.) nor (a draught of) *soma* from them (to sacrifice on their behalf)”<sup>33</sup>. Nevertheless, lower down there is a text (text 8) which advises those who, purposing to thrive (the result to be achieved as stated in text 9, the conversion motive which originated the ceremony being already obsolete), perform the ceremony “to offer, after they have settled down on the place of worship, a libation in the *gārhapatya* (fire) with (the

<sup>33</sup> On behalf, that is to say, of those (humans) who, following the laudable example of the Daiva Vrātyas perform the Sixtyone-day Rite of the Vrātyas described in the Brāhmāṇa, PB XXIV 18. Amongst the rites included is the *mahāvratā* in which figure the harlot, the Māgadha and the *Brāhmachārīn*, a very Eastern Vrātya combination. The Sixtyone-day Sattrā was really a large-scale Conversion *Vrātyastoma*. The text materially supports my contention that the Brāhman priests did not, at the date of the compilation of the PB texts, officiate in the Conversion *Vrātyastoma*. The “spots whence the gods were gone” must refer to the “god-forsaken” Non-Aryan East. These texts, whether taken as a whole or in detail, lend support to my views in a variety of ways.

Was the ceremony actually performed by the Eka-Vrātya of my Saga, after all, this Sixtyone-day Sattrā and not the *ekāha*, which is all that I felt justified in assuming for reasons of scientific “parsimony” ? The Sixtyone-day Sattrā would be likely (far better than the *ekāha*) to leave memories which would admit of being idealised in the manner of Prithu’s *yajña* in the Purāṇas. The one performed by him would in that case be the first Sixtyone-day Vrātya Sattrā ever held. It could not possibly at that date have been as thoroughly Brāhmanised as it appears from the PB account. It is possible also that the Sūta and Māgadha priests were made to go through quite a number of Vedic ceremonies under the direction of the Brāhmanas. Who can say that the office of the fourth priest, *brāhman*, did not have this very beginning ?



formula) : 'God Varuṇa, give us a place of divine worship. *Svāhā*'.

This PB account of the Sixtyone-day Rite, actually-named in the text (1b) as "the Sixtyone-day Rite of the Vrātyas, the adherents of the God," and mythologically buttressed in the manner stated, is fine material for historico-palaeontological analysis. The tale of ceremonies in the first text in Dr. Caland's translation is: An over-night rite (1); a twentyfour-versed proceeding day (2) three *abhiplava* six-day periods (3-20); a six-day period with the *prṣṭha* (*sāmāns*) (21-26); an *abhijit* (27); the three *svarsāmāni* (days) (but now in reversed order) (32-34); a *visvajit* (35); a six-day period with the *prṣṭha* (*sāmāns*) beginning with the thirty-three-versed day (36-41); one *abhiplava* six-day period (42-47); the two-days *āyus* and *go* (48-48); the ten days of the twelve-day period (50-59); the *mahāvratā* (day) (60); and an over-night rite (61). And yet this inordinately over-Brāhmanised ceremonial has to be performed without the aid of officiating priests, owing to its having originally been unquestionably a true Conversion Vrātyastoma though now (texts 8 and 9) it has become a rite of which a commentator might say, as the commentator of the Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra (XIV 69) says of the Vrātyastoma (which in that Sūtra-kāra's time had become entirely divorced from the conversion and regeneration ideas and had come to be an ordinary *svarga-kāma* ceremony like many others which never had any Vrātya association at any time) यः कश्चित् त्रैवर्णिको अधिकारी : "anyone belonging to any of the three *varṇas* is entitled to perform the ceremony". The यः कश्चित् त्रैवर्णिकः must thus muddle through the ceremony himself, as he must if he is not an expert Brāhman priest himself. And, though he is not a Vrātya and may have been owing Varuṇa religious allegiance inherited from his earliest forbears, he has



still to ask for a place of worship from this once acknowledged Samrāt of the Vedic Aryan Universe (before it was conquered and finally annexed by Prajāpati-Brahmā, to be historically precise) as though he were a Vrātya. These "incongruities" establish the claim I have made on behalf of PB XXIV 18 as a valuable fossil-bed of Indo-Aryan historico-literary materials.

I have, I hope, made out sufficient reasons to justify my statement that unlike the general run of *ad hoc* mythologies prepared to order which one comes across in such embarrassing abundance in the Brāhmaṇas, the *Vrātyastoma* mythologies are of clear historical significance. They mirror and reflect a striking political occurrence and I can claim them as valuable corroborative adjuncts in support of my views.

## Section IX

### The Sūta and the Māgadha.

#### The Fever-Charm Sūkta.

The stage has now been set for the interplay of forces which, as a consequence of such interplay, gave birth to a literature and culture so astonishingly unique that every attempt to utilise for its study analogies presented by civilizations of other countries without due regard had to the uniqueness of this civilization has inevitably led to puzzlements and inconsequentialities. The literature is the literature of the Vedas, with the dependent Brāhmaṇas (including the Upaniṣads) and the Sūtra books (of which the Śrauta and Gṛhya Sūtras are the principal), all that in fact goes by the general designation of "Śrauta literature", and, lastly, the Purāṇas; and the culture is all that is implied in the *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma*. This literature I shall hereafter denominate "the Indo-Aryan Literature"; the culture, I shall in the same way designate as "the Indo-Aryan Culture."

But before I take up the analysis of this literature and culture in order to discover their relation to the forces to which the impact of the two civilizations so diametrically contrasted as the Vedic Aryan civilization of the Aryan West and the Vrātya civilization of the Non-Aryan East gave birth, I must dispose of two other subjects who are still weighing on my conscience : the Sūta and the Māgadha. Justice, I hope, has been done to the third, the *Puṃśchalā hetaera* ; and it is indeed a source of unalloyed satisfaction to me that this has been

found possible "without touching pro-Aryan or Aryan-inherited sensibilities. The problem that arose in her connection did not concern herself; it was her association with the Vrātya that called for explanation. That explanation has been furnished, I hope, to everybody's satisfaction<sup>34</sup>.

Whilst the profession and function of the *Puṃśchaṭ* have been as transparent as (notoriously) were some of her habiliments, those of the Sūta and the Māgadha remain, to all appearance, shrouded in impenetrable mystery. The riddles these have presented to scholars have beaten even those presented by the Eka-Vrātya himself.

In Keith-Macdonell's Vedic Index, against the caption "Sūta," it is observed that this is the name of a court official often mentioned with the *grāmaṇī*. He, like the *grāmaṇī*, is one of the eight *vīras* (the others are the King's brother, his son, the queen-consort, the house-chaplain, the charioteer and the chamberlain) who "sustain" the King at the Rāja-Ekāha ceremony described in PB XIX 1. 4 and one of the eleven *ratnins* (jewels: they include most of the above eight) found figuring in the Rājasūya ceremony as described in the later Brāhmaṇas (Śatapatha Br. V 3. 1. 5); we have seen him described as a *rājakṛt* (which must mean the same thing as *vīra*, "sustainer") in AV III 5. 7. His inclusion in the omnibus enumerations of the Śatarudriya and Puruṣamedha texts (duly noted in the Index) has no special significance, so far as I can see. The only thing the Note, taken as a whole, appears to me to have conclusively brought out is that modern commentators (Eggeling, Bloomfield, Roth, Whitney, Weber and Hopkyns are cited by name, and in this galaxy must be included the authors of the Index themselves) can get

<sup>34</sup> See p. 48 *supra*.

as keenly exercised over the problem of what exactly was the profession, function or purpose in life of a Sūta, as the Sūtra scholiasts, Śaṇḍilya, Dhānañjaya and Lātyāyana were found to have been over the precise make-up of the *vipathā*. The one fact of prime significance registered in this conscientious catalogue of odds and ends is that in the Śātarudriya texts the Sūta is spoken of as "inviolable".<sup>35</sup> But why out of the variety of occupations which the Śrauta and Purāṇa literatures plainly testify the Sūtas to have followed at their individual choice, this one circumstance should have led the authors of the Index finally to tie the Sūta down to the single occupation of a "bard-herald", I for one fail entirely to understand.

The Vaiṇya-Pr̥thu legend of the Purāṇas, according to which the Sūta and the Māgadha sprang into existence by a kind of spontaneous generation out of Prajāpati's *yajña* held in honour of the "First of Consecrated Monarchs", marks them out as specially designed for the one purpose of singing the praises and acting as the bardic repositories of the annals and chronicles of the imperial house which Pr̥thu founded. That this dedication of the Sūta and Māgadha to the profession of royal bards was

<sup>35</sup> In the text of the Taittirīyā Samhitā, the word is अहन्त्याय (नमो सूताय अहन्त्याय, IV 5. 2). In the Vājasaneyī Samhitā (XVI 18), the text has read, from before the days of the commentators, as अहन्त्यै which being derived (how it is not explained) from अहन्ति is said to mean 'not-killing.' अहन्त्यै is certainly nearer to अहन्त्याय than to अहन्ति. The "Sūta" is made to fit by being taken to mean सारथि, "charioteer." The Taittirīyā Samhitā reading is obviously the correct one. The Vājasaneyī text equally obviously has got mutilated. This is the view apparently taken by Eggeling of the latter text (S. B. E. XLIII 151). The Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā reading अहन्त्याय must also be erroneous, if it be not a permissible variation of अहन्त्याय, which अहन्त्यै also may well be,

not due to the caprice of the originator of the legend is made clear by the practice followed with but few exceptions in the extant Purāṇas ( for all that they have been so completely Brāhmaṇised ) of making them issue from the lips of a Paurāṇist Sauti, as though no one who was not a Sūta could be the accredited narrator of a Purāṇa and as though no Purāṇa could claim to be accepted as the right kind of stuff if it did not find a Sūta as its narrator. It is remarkable that the earliest and the greatest of the extant Purāṇa books, the Mahābhārata, was not content with borrowing the seal and sign-manual of the "Redactor" of the Vedas as sufficient in themselves for giving itself canonical authority. The narrative had further to be contrived to come ( even though at third hand ) from the lips of the Paurāṇist Sauti Ugrasravas, the son of Lomaharṣaṇa. A Purāṇa, whatever other basis of authority it might claim to possess, was somehow not felt to be quite in order unless it happened to be narrated by a Sūta by caste. It looks as though the Sūtas stood to Purāṇas in about the same relation in which the Brahman̄s stood to the Vedas.

And yet, does any one with an iota of historical sense doubt for a moment that the authors of the Mahābhārata were neither the saint Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa nor the Sūta Ugrasravas, but Brāhmaṇ protagonists of the *varṇa-āśrama* cult, after the same had fully matured, masquerading from behind these names ? Does anybody to-day really imagine that Lomaharṣaṇa or Romaharṣaṇa, the Sūta pupil of Dvaipāyana, and not a nameless Brāhmaṇ of a very late age was the real author of the Vāyu Purāṇa ? What then may be the reason behind the solemn pretence which is found maintained in Purāṇa after Purāṇa that the

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work is genuine Sūta-told stuff and copyrighted as such<sup>36</sup> ?

A version of the Vaiṇya Pṛthu legend occurs in the Mahābhārata itself ; and the Mahābhārata, as has been seen, exhibits its loyalty to the practice alluded to in its very opening lines. The incongruity from the *varṇa-āśrama* point of view of making the Niṣāda ancestor of *Mlechchha* hill-tribes come out of the body of a Vedic Aryan Rājarsi (however evil-minded he might have been, the same body immediately afterwards yielding up Pṛthu, though the Niṣāda somehow misses being styled a Vaiṇya, like Pṛthu), as also the incongruity (from the fully caste-conscious orthodox Brāhmaṇ point of view of the age of the Epics) of making a *yajña* performed by the Āngirasas in collaboration with the chief of the Vedic Pantheon, Prajāpati himself,<sup>37</sup> give birth to two caste-groups whom the Brāhmaṇ schematists do not know how to place in a perfectly conceived caste-

<sup>36</sup> This pretence is not observed in the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa which is expressly fathered on Parāśara appears at first sight to be bent on defying it, for the opening chapter solemnly affirms Parāśara (and not his son Vyāsa) to have been the person appointed to be **पुराणसंहिताकर्त्ता**. Nevertheless, in Part III Ch. 6, it reproduces verbatim the generally accepted Purāṇa account of Dvaipāyana Vyāsa's authorship of the Purāṇa-Saṃhitā and of his having made it over for keeping and teaching to his famous Sūta pupil Romaharṣaṇa. It also reproduces with the same fidelity the *yājñic* origination of the Sūta and the Māgadha for the (apparently pre-appointed) purpose of chronicling the virtues and glories of the Royal house of Vaiṇya-Pṛthu. The mistake is not repeated in the later Purāṇas (the Bhāgavata, the Vṛhannāradiya, the Kalkī must all be later in date) which quietly revert to the old practice of putting forward an eponymous Sūta narrator who is either Romaharṣaṇa himself or his son Ugrasravas.

<sup>37</sup> Vāya Pur. 62. 133 37. As already pointed out, Prajāpati himself, by origin, was a Daiva Vratya who however had for logical reasons to be absorbed into the Vedic Pantheon, with that rank, without question or ceremony. See pp. 64-65, *supra*.

scheme, however, pass unnoticed by the Brāhmaṇ authors of the Great Epic, who take them over from old traditions, as found, without doubt or question. They take equally for granted the fact, also recorded without question in the Mahābhārata, that the Sūtas and Māgadhas follow other professions besides that of royal bards. Some of these incongruities do however strike the mind of the Brāhmaṇ author of the Vāyu Purāṇa with such force that he feels compelled to search for explanations ; and the explanations he furnishes are based upon such a careful and conscientious weighing of all available data that I can scarcely help wishing that the authors of the Vedic Index had, somehow, him as a collaborator when they prepared their Note on the "Sūta".

The explanations offered by the author of the Vāyu Purāṇa will be found in chapters 1 and 62 of that Book. He gives full faith to the legend (as indeed he could not help doing, considering the age in which he wrote his explanations) and accepts the spontaneous generation of the Sūta and Māgadha from out of the स्रुग्भाण्ड of the *yajña* as a fact, and also that the divinely appointed hereditary calling of the Sūta (and of course also of the Māgadha) was that of minstrel-chronicler of the sagas of the houses of the King and of the nobility :

स्वधर्म एव सूतस्य सद्भिर्दृष्टः पुरातनैः ।  
 देवतानामृषीणाञ्च राज्ञां चामिततेजसाम् ॥  
 वंशानां धारणां कार्य्यं श्रुतानाञ्च महात्मनाम् ।  
 इतिहासपुराणेषु दिष्टा ये ब्रह्मवादिभिः ॥

Vāyu Pur. 1. 31-32<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> This description, it will be noted, does not confine the Sūta's functions to the chronicling of the family histories of the Kings and nobles only. It takes in the chronicling of similar histories of the Devas, R̥sis, and eminent people. The work assigned to them by the legend expands under Brāhmaṇic influence, as will be presently shown.

But unlike the authors of the Note in the Vedic Index, he cannot persuade himself to close his eyes on what must have been patent facts in his days that the Sūtas followed a number of inferior professions, such as those of soldiers, drivers of horses, elephants and chariots, and finally of healers of bodily ills ; and he faithfully records that these are his inferior callings ( आपद्धर्माः in Paurāṇic parlance ).

But what exactly was his view of the principal *dharma* of the Sūta, as chronicler-bard-poet ? Here again, being an orthodox Brāhmaṇ of the age to which he belonged, and a Paurāṇist to boot, he is met by difficulties which need not trouble authors of Vedic or Paurāṇic Indexes (or investigators of any kind into the literature of the Vedas and Purāṇas) of our day. Brāhmaṇ schematists claiming almost quasi-canonical authority had already fixed the Sūta's place in their caste-scheme as a वर्णसंकर of प्रतिलोम origin. In the Manu Saṃhitā, X 11, for instance, it is authoritatively laid down :

क्षत्रियाद्विप्रकन्यायां सुतो भवति जातितः ।

वैश्यान्मागध वैदेहौ राजविप्राङ्गना सुतौ ॥

as it has also been laid down (X 8) of the Niṣāda that he was the वर्णसंकर issue of an अनुलोम union, viz, from a Sūdra woman through procreation by a Brāhmaṇ father. This was hard, very hard indeed, to reconcile with the origins assigned to the Sūta the Māgadha and the Niṣāda in the legend. But our author did not lack either example in dealing with a difficulty of this kind, or courage if it was he who invented the explanation that is given in verse 84, of the 1st Chapter of the Purāṇa. At the *yajña* held in honour of Pṛthu, he says :—

ऐन्द्रेण हविषा तत्र हविः पृक्तं बृहस्पतेः ।

बृहवेन्द्राय देवाय ततः सुतो व्यजायत ॥

शिष्यहृदयेन यत्पुक्तमभिभूतं गुरोर्हविः ।  
अधरोत्तरचारेण जज्ञे तद्वर्णं वैकृतम् ॥

Vāyu Pur. 62. 138-139 ; also 1. 35-36.

There you are ! In the pot placed over the sacrificial fire, the oblation meant for Indra and that meant for Vṛhaspati somehow got mixed. So the Sūta, born though he never was from human parents of any kind or caste, sprang into existence as a वर्णसंकर ! It is just the kind of explanation which, thick as leaves in Vallombrosa, choke the Brāhmaṇa books. I feel disposed to acquit the author of the Vāyu Purāṇa of all responsibility for originating this explanation. The Purāṇas' style of invention is of a different and more concrete order. This particular explanation must have taken shape in the heyday of the Brāhmaṇa literature.

But what was the nature of the Sūta's principal *dharma* ? Was it Brāhmaṇya-dharma, Kṣātra-dharma or Vaiśya-dharma ? The author notes, for all that the Sūta was *varṇa-saṅkara* of *pratiloma* origin according to the theorists, that his principal *dharma* was in fact and reality and was generally accepted to be that of a Brāhmaṇ's.

यच्च क्षत्रात् समभवद् ब्राह्मण्यं हीनयोनितः ।  
सूतः पूर्व्वेण साधर्म्यात्तुल्यधर्म्मां प्रकीर्तितः ॥  
मध्यमो ह्येष सूतस्य धर्मः क्षत्रोपजीवनम् ।  
रथनागाश्चरितं जघन्यञ्च चिकित्सितम् ॥

Vāyu Pur. 62. 140-141.

The author does undoubtedly wobble in his explanation. The ब्राह्मण्य of the Sūta is established, but by giving the वर्णवैकृत an अनुलोम colouring. The ब्राह्मण्य of the Sūta must have been plainly undeniable to have justified such a course. And, it stood to reason also that Lomaharṣaṇa

(the Sūta eponymous narrator of the Vāyu Purāṇa itself) would not have been specially selected by Kṛṣṇa-Dwaipāyana as the pupil to whom the Purāṇa Veda (Vāyu Pur. 1. 17) was to be imparted for preservation and instruction, if he Lomaharṣaṇa had not, in the estimation of that "repository of scriptural knowledge and *mores*", been as good as a Brāhmaṇ. But the principal datum which would have clinched the argument in favour of the Sūta's Brāhmaṇ-hood, this author is prevented from adducing by a strange irony of fate. Lomaharṣaṇa, the eponymous author of the Vāyu Purāṇa, cannot obviously be made to state (what is reported in a number of the other Purāṇas whereof Lomaharṣaṇa is not the putative narrator<sup>39</sup>) that Baladeva, the irascible brother of Kṛṣṇa Mādhava had to do penance for *brahmahatyā* for doing to death this very Lomaharṣaṇa.

Lomaharṣaṇa, the report runs, was narrating the Purāṇas before an assembly of Ṛṣis (like the one depicted with singular dramatic felicity and circumstantiality in the opening chapter of the Mahābhārata), when Baladeva arrived upon the scene. The assembled Ṛṣis rose up to do honour to

39 Of the other extant Purāṇas of which the putative narrator is Lomaharṣaṇa, one is the Vṛhannāradiya in which it is amusing to note that the roles of teacher and pupil assigned in the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad (VI. 7) in the relation between the two interlocutors, Sanatkumāra and Nārada, are reversed. In the first Adhyāya, Lomaharṣaṇa is spoken of as being engaged in performing many *yajñas* and as having learned all the Śāstras from Veda Vyāsa, as though he were Brāhmaṇ born. The author of the Vāyu Purāṇa, in spite of his obvious desire to do justice to the Sūta, had not the courage to go so far. He felt constrained in verse 33 of Ch. 1 to put the following reservation in Lomaharṣaṇa's own mouth: नहि वेदेष्वधीकारः कश्चित् सूतस्य दृश्यते The Lomaharṣaṇa Baladeva episode is recounted in a number of Purāṇas of which for that very reason he could not be made the putative spokesman; the Mārkaṇḍeya (Ch. 6), the Bhāgavata (Ch. 10. 78) and the Kalkī (Ch. 3. 13-20) for instance.



the redoubtable Kṣatriya warrior noble. But Lomaharṣaṇa was such a stickler for the dignity of his calling that he did not even leave his seat ! Enraged at this exhibition of stiff-necked perversity on the part of a Sūta, the Kṣatriya (a blue-blooded Varangian, if my surmises are correct, and not a Vrātya by descent) killed him then and there.

What a fascinating fossil deposit to charm the heart of a collector !

Lomaharṣaṇa was not stiff-necked. In retaining his seat and pose he was appropriately maintaining the dignity of his calling, which is acknowledged and conceded in the deference the Sūta narrator of the Purāṇas has invariably had accorded to him by his Ṛṣi audience in descriptions of scenes like the above left in the Mahābhārata and other works of undoubtedly Brāhmaṇ authorship, and in the honorific adjectives which were applied to the first-born Sūta and Māgadha in the Brāhmaṇised Purāṇa narratives of their birth at Prthu's *yajña* (the Sūta is महामति, the Māgadha is प्राज्ञ )

The Baladeva-Lomaharṣaṇa episode which the Vāyu Purāṇa is precluded from noticing takes note of the fact of the Sūta being अहन्त्य (inviolable) and the reason therefor being his ब्राह्मण्य ! The reason of the ब्राह्मण्य, again, simply is that when caste entered into the Aryan scheme of things, the Sūta started (along with the Māgadha) as a Brāhmaṇ and standing on exactly the same level as the Aryan Brāhmaṇs. The writers of the Note on Sūta in the Vedic Index have gone entirely wrong in tracing his inviolability to his heraldic functions. The Sūta, like the "herald" of the European feudal civilization, did keep records of names and pedigrees, but ~~he~~ never bore messages between prince and prince as the European "herald" did. This was the function of the Dūta, and not of the Sūta. The Dūta, according to Nītiśāstra books,

had to be an educated person and an eloquent speaker (वक्ता) he did not have to carry loads of saga-stuff in his cranium to discharge his functions of a Dūta, at least in Indo-Aryan India.

In Indo-Aryan India, the अहन्त्य attribute belonged to the members of two professions, the Priest's and the Dūta's, though, because the qualifications needed for a Dūta would be most readily discovered in a person who had been brought up as a priest, the two inviolabilities would often be found combined in one and the same person.

The Sāta was inviolable not because he was a "bard-herald," but because he was a "bard-priest." He was by profession not a herald in the sense in which the authors of the Note in the Vedic Index understand the term for the purpose of deriving his inviolability therefrom.

In the Dispensation of the Eka-Vrātya, before the Great Vrātyastoma-Rājasāya ceremony, the Sūtas and Māgadhas were the bard-priests of Vrātya-land chronicling sagas and legends and officiating as priests as well at the *Rājākarmāṇis* of the King and the nobility and also at the *gṛhya* rites of the common people. I have already indicated what an overwhelmingly large part sorceries and incantations played at these ceremonies. The Brāhmanas in Aryan land also were accustomed to such practices though in lesser degrees. The practice of these Ātharvanic ceremonies as a whole however hardly afforded room for the priests thereof developing abstract thinking and acuteness of intelligence, whereas the Aryan ritualistic *mantras* and practices had a great educative influence in this direction. But superficially at least the difference would not be noticeable, at any rate by the first observing Aryan Brāhmanas.

Besides, it will be remembered that at the date of the Great *Stoma*, the Brāhmanas were not yet caste-conscious

or exclusive. The *Śtoma*, as I have taken pains to stress, did not convert any individual Non-Aryan into any specific Brāhmaṇic caste ; it drew the whole population towards whom the Great Vrātya stood as *gr̥hapati* into the Aryan communion, caste and all, caste having been indissociably appurtenant to this Great Household ; so that, to put the facts that happened in language which would describe them with complete exactitude, we should say, it was the Rājanya caste of Vrātya land which drew into itself and absorbed the Aryan Kṣatriyas, and not that the Aryan Kṣatriyas admitted into their ranks and absorbed the Eastern Rājanyas ; and so again it was the Vrātya Brāhmaṇ caste of Sūtas and Māgadhas which absorbed within itself the Aryan visiting Brāhmaṇs.

But the movement, as I have said, was not confined to Vrātya land. It caught on and spread all over the Aryan lands, passing over territories which must have been there, which were neither fully Aryanised nor fully Vrātya. The synthetic amalgamating movement, thus started, appeared to have had a momentum of its own which took a long time to work itself out. It is finely reflected, as regards the Rājanya class, in the heroic attempts made in the *Harivaṃśa*, the *Vāyu* and some other *Purāṇas* to exhibit the members of all the ruling houses of northern India, of every caste origin, as branches of one and the same genealogical tree, the house of Karna, the Sūta, being made as much a part of it as even Ekalavya's, the redoubtable Niṣāda chieftain's. Therefore the Pauranists' occasional plaint that many people not deserving the rank had been slipping into the Kṣatriya caste was not without foundation, even though it was their own essays in genealogical eclecticism that must have been partly at any rate responsible for such happenings. The Aryan Brāhmaṇs of the West must have been drawn into the Eastern

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Vrātya Brāhmaṇ caste-group in a similar manner and at the same time.

That the names of the premier castes (Brāhmaṇ, Kṣatriya, Rājanya) are of Aryan origin does not militate against the soundness of my views ; for the literature in which the results of this synthesis and amalgamation came to be recorded being entirely Brāhmaṇ-controlled and expressed in their language (and not in some other that might possibly have been affected by the Vrātyas ), it was but natural that, in that literature, the Brāhmaṇic designations should prevail over the non-Brāhmaṇic. Exactly the same thing happened, as we saw, when the Great Vrātya Deities personating respectively the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of the Universe were absorbed into the Vedic Patheon. They received Aryan designations.

Undoubtedly caste-consciousness, indigenous in Vrātya land, deepened with the advent of the Aryan Brāhmaṇ. Caste-distinctions became more rigid under his guiding hand. The Brāhmaṇs would not be human if they did not seize the chance which the existence in Vrātya land of castes afforded them of finally establishing their intellectual and moral precedence over the other orders, for the sake of which they had even faced expulsion and exile from the lands of their birth. But this rigidity did not arrive all at once.

Thus the immediate result of the Aryanisation of Vrātya land was the amalgamation of the Aryan Brāhmaṇs and the Sūtas and Māgadhas into one single caste, namely that of "Brāhmaṇs". Whether the attribute of "inviolability" was derived from the Aryan or the Non-Aryan source is of no consequence. It is enough that the Sūtas became *āhantya* because they started with being Brāhmaṇs.

But it was not long before the sheep in this amalgamated Brāhmaṇ caste began to smell out the goats and seek dissociation from the latter. Professional rivalry was added to the other circumstances to widen the breach.

As priests, the Sūtas and Māgadhas, lacking the education and intellectual and other discipline which the former underwent during the period of their *brahmacharya*, stood no comparison whatever with the Aryan Brāhmaṇs. Their displacement from their office in the households of the King and the Rājanyas would follow almost immediately upon the formal accession of the Rājanyas into Aryanism. The richer Vaiśya castes in the city would follow the example of the Rājanyas. Here the Sūtas and the Māgadhas would sink into the position of court-ministrels and noblemen's toadies, a position not at all calculated to enhance the respect in which they were held.

The Aryan Brāhmaṇs who displaced them were not, on their part, proselytizers after the fashion of some brotherhoods of modern Christian missionaries. They kept the *Rājakarmāṇi* but improved and "rishified" them, making them more interesting and artistic in the process. It is clear from the Atharva Veda texts that they did not even despise the superstitions of the common people; they took these up too and "rishified" them. Bloomfield's happy characterisation of the Brāhmaṇ's art will bear a second repetition: "The Atharva Veda with its popular beliefs poses outwardly in the same attitude of dignity as the R̥gVeda with the soma-rites; i.e. Brāhmaṇical priests handle charm and hocus pocus as religion, not as superstition. As a natural consequence, the Vedic Pantheon is brought down and made to participate in the common people's customs and superstitions".

The extent of the displacement of the Sūtas and the



Māgadhas from their business as officiating priests to the Rājanyas as well as to the common people and the expedition with which the operation had been consummated will be apparent once it is realised that *the Atharva-Veda was composed mainly to provide and serve for a Complete Priests' Manual for Aryan Brāhmaṇ priests officiating as such within Vṛātya land and for the entire population thereof* (the whole population having got Aryanised *en bloc*), and not for this or that person or group of persons as might be supposed. This is a fundamental position in my thesis towards which I have now been working for some time ; and I am very anxious indeed that this should be specially borne in mind as such by the reader who has had the patience to follow me thus far.

But of course, as will be fully explained later on, it was and was bound to be something more than an Ātharvaṇ priest-practitioner's *vade mecum*. It was bound to contain a fair quantity of material of purely Vedic Aryan origin for personal use, or for use or adaptation for use in the service of their *yajmāns*, specially if they happened to be of the spell and incantation variety. This in fact it does ; and the purely Aryan origin is, in the case of some of them, easily detected by the presence of patent "incongruities" of the kind I have been seizing for use in my thesis. (One of these I shall have occasion almost immediately to treat in the way I have been treating other "incongruities"). It would contain some of the things the Brāhmaṇ priests have learned from the King and their other Rājanya *yajmāns* at theological and cosmogonic soirees which must have been an event of constant occurrence in Atharva land. In what spirit both the Brāhmaṇs and the Rājanyas entered into the pursuit of the Upaniṣadic science is finely reflected in the accounts

of religious conferences held in Janaka's Court left in the Vṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad and records of other less formal and spectacular proceedings to be found in that and the other Āraṇyakas. Thus it is that the Atharva Veda has come to include *brahmodya* and other theosophical and cosmogonical hymns of a very superior order contrasting strangely with the hocus pocus of spells and curses which seem almost to be the staple of that Veda. And then there would also be original poetic compositions made by the Brāhmaṇs stirred by inspiration derived from what they were observing and experiencing in this strange and unfamiliar country. Two examples, the Vratya Book and the Bhauma Sūkta, I have already largely drawn upon for the purposes of my thesis.

European scholars who have studied this Veda as no Indian scholar has done stand completely puzzled and befogged by (i) the contrast the contents of this Veda present to those of the three others, (ii) the heterogeneous character of its contents, ranging from the extremes of the sublime to abysmal depths of the childish and the ridiculous, from ideal loving-kindness to black obscenities and spit-fire imprecations, (iii) the large amount of space allotted to the *Rājakarmāṇi*, (iv) the excessive prevalence of spells and curses running through the whole gamut of the *bhaisajyāni*, the *āyusyāni*, the *ābhichārikāni* the *kṛtapratiharanāni* the *strīkarmāṇi*, the *pausṭikāni* and the *prāyaścittāni*, (v) the glorification of the King and his priest (Purohit) and of the Brāhmaṇs in general, carried to disproportionate lengths. But their puzzlement will be dissipated, if they will but fix their minds on the place, the occasion, the manner, the purpose, and the agency by which the collection, as I have suggested, came to be made. In the very incongruities which puzzle them I have indeed found the greatest support for my thesis as above outlined.

But to return to the Sūta and the Māgadha.

The Sūtas of the Anūpadeśa appear from all accounts to have proved themselves more adaptable to the altered situation than their fellow bard-priests from Magadha. They took to soldiering, driving chariots, elephants, and horses, and even attended to men's physical ailments as a profession. By their ability and resourcefulness they attained the rank of *grāmaṇī* or equerry and that with such frequency as to be generally ranked as *vīra*, *ratnīn* or *rājakṛt*. The Sūta even raises himself exceptionally, as was the case with Karna, to the rank of a King (governor really).<sup>40</sup> From the accounts in the Śrauta literature it seems clear that the Brāhmaṇs did not regard the Sūtas with excessive hatred, possibly because they had ceased to be serious professional rivals, having as a class apparently abandoned priesthood for those other occupations.

It was otherwise however with the once *प्राज्ञ* Māgadha. It was he who came to be expressly designated as a "*brahmadandhu*", i.e., "a spurious or degraded Brāhmaṇ". Out in the villages, he must still have continued to officiate as *ग्रामयाजी* or *पुरायाज्ञिय*; and even to-day, he may be recognised as a survival in the *bhāts* and *agradānīs*. To have merited the opprobrium in which his name is enshrined in Brāhmaṇic literature, it looks as if these mountebanks of Māgadhas had contested every inch of the ground they

<sup>40</sup> I cannot quite make out what kind of "Kings" the Mahābhārata thought Karna or Droṇa to have been. If they were "Kings" of Aṅga and North Pāñchāla, how could they, as they appeared to be, always in attendance in the Kuru Court? Were they really some kind of governors under the Kuru King, and did they in that case govern by deputy? Even territorial sovereigns like Jarāsandha (an annexationist by policy) could not quite dispense with semi-sovereign feudal agencies for controlling outlying areas. A thoroughly centralised autocracy requires an organised bureaucracy for its maintenance, and this does not grow up all at once. They very probably were Kuru feudal vassals.

were called upon to vacate in favour of the Brāhmaṇs. They stuck round the Vrātya and the Rājanyas as Court buffoons and ministers perhaps of their vices, the lewd associates of gamblers, dancers, singers and harlots, all the riff-raff parasite crew that is usually to be found in the entourage of an Eastern King or Nobleman who happens also to be a man of pleasure. But a *brahmabandhu*, the Māgadha still remained, a name truly of evil repute, but reminiscent nonetheless of his former state from which he was fallen. But, oh, what a fall it was !

It has to be clearly understood and acknowledged however that this fall was still of the future when Paryāya 2 of the Vrātya Book (AV XV. 2) came to be composed. As he who runs may read, the references to him in that Book were not intended to disparage him, any more than the references to the Pumschaḥ were intended to disparage her ; he had not fallen as low as he did in later times, Bloomfield's assumption to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Pañchavimśa Brāhmaṇa account of the Conversion *Vrātyastoma* does not provide for the Māgadha being in attendance at the ceremony to take over, with the cast-off equipments of the Vrātyas, the sins of their unregenerate state. It is the Sūtra doctors (Lātyāyana, Kātyāyana) who tow him in for that degrading service (Lātyā Śr. S. VIII 6. 28 ; Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4. 22). Let these equipments, say they, go to the still unconverted Vrātyas or to the *Māgadha* *leśyāyā brahmabandhu*<sup>41</sup> ( मागधेरीयाय ब्रह्मबन्धवे ). " This latter expression," comments Weber, " is only explicable if we assume

<sup>41</sup> What the term *brahmabandhu* conveyed in the minds of those who used them is clearly brought out in the context of verse 1 of Khaṇḍa 1 of the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad. The description applies to Brāhmaṇs who have not made themselves conversant in youth with Vedic knowledge and Vedic mores by living for the requisite number of years in the houses of Brāhmaṇ preceptors as *brahmachāri* Vedic

that Buddhism, with its anti-Brāhmanical tendencies was at the time flourishing in Magadha, and the absence of any such allusion in the Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa is significant as to the time which elapsed between this work and the Sūtra of Lātyāyana" (Weber, History of Indian Literature, p. 79).

Here indeed is speculation degenerating into the flimsiest inconsequentialities. European scholars as a rule somehow cannot get Buddhism off their brains. The moment I find them starting the Buddhistic hare for an explanation, I become suspicious. Weber's speculations on the Vrātya-Māgadha-Puṃśchalī association, at pp. 111-112 of the same book, are even more incomprehensibly erratic.

students. The Sūtas and Māgadhas would from the outset be exactly this kind of Brāhman; and it is in the highest degree unlikely that they, at any time after their *pro forma* entry into the Aryan communion, as a body adopted the Aryan *grhya* practices, amongst which living the life of a *brahmachārī* Vedic student during non-age was regarded as of prime importance, the text of PB XVII 1.2 actually specifying न हि ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति as one of the marks of Vrātyas. The parties to the conversation in the course which the term is used were the Brāhman Uddālaka Āruṇi and his son Svetaketu, the same Svetaketu who later applies the term "*rājanyabandhu*" disparagingly to describe the renowned Kṣatriya Upaniṣad doctor Pravāhaṇa Jaibali. Svetaketu no doubt bore a grudge against Pravāhaṇa who had grievously wounded his vanity for scholarship. But the term as applied to him by Svetaketu was not mere abuse. I have supposed Pravāhaṇa to have been of Vrātya Rājanya ancestry. The *pro forma* conversion of his ancestor to Aryanism could scarcely be conceived to have made him or his descendants after him strict *achāra*-observing *devīja* Kṣatriyas. Pravāhaṇa obviously was no *śrotriya* and made no pretence to being one. There is a passage in the Vṛhadāranyaka account of the same incident which suggests that Upaniṣadic free-thinking and teaching ran in the family to which Pravāhaṇa belonged, and Gautama Uddālaka was by no means the first Brāhman who had come to this family of Vrātya *rajanyabandhus* to be initiated in the mysteries of the Vedānta: (Chhāndog. Up. V 3; Vṛhadāranyaka. Up. VI 2. 8).



The translation of मागधदेशीयाय ब्रह्मबन्धवे has presented difficulties to commentators. I offer mine. It is : "to the spurious Brāhmaṇ such as the Māgadha and his like" (the word is मागध and not मगध, which requires giving देशीय a sense which does not import "country" : देशीय is the तद्धित affix signifying ईषदसमाप्ति, "like, but not completely," so that the Sūtra scholiasts in question must be understood to have been drawing into the net, as logically they were bound to do, not the Māgadha *brahmabandhu* alone, but others like him besides, such as the Sūtas and the Videhas or such of them at least as were still sticking on to priestly work of sorts. Was indeed a further degradation deliberately intended when these three were later classified as वर्णसंकर of प्रतिलोम origin whilst the Niṣāda was in a manner placed above them by being ranked as a वर्णसंकर of अनुलोम origin ? I doubt if fanatic schematists ever allow themselves to be moved by sentiment. I doubt, too, if professional rivalry alone would be enough to drive the one amongst the rivals who happened to have control over the literature to such extremely mean lengths. But anything is possible to the envenomed Brāhmaṇism of the type which has found expression in the extant Manu Saṃhitā (see Manu, Book X).

Baudhāyana too omits reference to the Māgadha or to any *brahmabandhu* in his account of the Conversion *Prātyastoma*. Quite needlessly and unintelligently however, he foists this creature (or at least the shadow of him) on the *stoma* for the निन्दितावकीर्णः, the one that was meant for Aryans fallen from grace through flagrant defiance of the Aryan *mores*. Equally unintelligently he drags in the Puṃśchalī also (or her shadow, is it ?). Lapses from Aryan proprieties could not have been rare by any means in Aryan lands wherever situated, human nature being what it always has been. Think of the trouble and

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expense that would have to be incurred if a *brahmandhu* Māgadha had to be paid passage fare and fees every time a ceremony like this had to be performed in Saurāstra or Śūrasena or in the Bāhlika country ! But do not imagine that Baudhāyana's madness was without method altogether. Far from it. He, the Māgadha, and she, the Puṃśchalū, had to be *brahmandhu* all right, but they need not necessarily have been Māgadha and Puṃśchalū in fact. All that was necessary was that the words ( curses and obscenities ? ) which these, if genuine, would have ejaculated should be uttered by individuals personating the one and the other ! Commentators may quarrel over the grammar of this passage : whatever the issue of this quarrel, it will not affect my position in the slightest degree. My position is (and I do not see how that position can on the materials presented be in any way shaken) that this participation in the ceremony (in the degrading role assigned to him) of the *brahmandhu* Māgadha is an invention of the commentators to make the ceremony fit in with a totally erroneous and extraordinarily inept reading of the 2nd Paryāya of the Atharva Veda. It was an absurd attempt to improve upon the Pañchaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa text by finding suitable places and functions in the ceremony for the Māgadha and the Puṃśchalī, simply because these names happened to be mentioned in the AV texts in close juxtaposition with the *vipatha*, *uṣṇīṣa* and other equipments of the Vrātya *gṛhapati*. Lātyāyana exhibits some slight trace of rationality by interpolating the Māgadha into the Conversion *stoma*, though his rationality too is rationality instinct with malice, since he too is not content with introducing *any* Māgadha ; it must be a *brahmandhu* Māgadha. But Baudhāyana's foisting of him, with the Puṃśchalī thrown in, on the excommunicate-regeneration *stoma* is downright dementia.

What I have said will be found to dispose of similar references in the other Sūtra works.<sup>42</sup> The even more disgusting role assigned to the Māgadha in the Mahāvratā ceremony in the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa (II 404, copied in the Āpastamba Śr. S. XXI 17. 19), I cannot but regard as an equally ill-natured invention.

I do not for a moment doubt that once a provision like this was concocted, real or faked *brahmapandhu* Māgadha and *brahmapandhu* Puṃśchalū (whatever this latter creature was) would be available in plenty to play the parts assigned to them in the Sūtras. But whether the parts assigned to them in the *Vrātyastomas* ever became, in fact and practice, a part of any ceremony of that name would depend for answer upon the further question whether the very ceremony of which it was (in the blundering fashion I have indicated) made a part by Sūtra scholiasts had or had not by then ceased to be practised. If the ceremony in question be supposed to have still remained extant, the credit for this particular development thereof must be assigned to the Sūtra scholiasts and not to the original organisers of the ceremony.

I am inclined to the opinion however that the *Vrātyastomas* as described in the PB had already ceased

<sup>42</sup> The treatment of the matter in the Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra does nevertheless need specific notice. Unlike the Lātyāyana Sūtras it takes in all the four *stomas*; and after doing that, prescribes the setting up of a *grihapati* in all cases by the following text: यो नृशंसतमस्यद् द्रव्यवत्तमो वानूवान्तमो वा तस्य गार्हपत्ये दीक्षेण ! by नृशंस the निन्दितावकीर्णी class is meant. Kātyāyana's confusion over the whole business is worse even than Baudhāyana's. The result for all the *stomas* is finally summed up thus: व्रात्यस्तोमेनेष्टु । व्रात्यभावाद्विरमेयुः ; व्यवहार्या भवन्ति The passage referring to the Māgadha: मागधदेशीयाय ब्रह्मबन्धवे दक्षिणाकाले व्रात्यधनानि दद्युः । Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4. 3-7, 27-28.

to be performed for either conversion or regeneration purposes and had in consequence ceased to be even properly understood in Baudhāyana's time.<sup>43</sup> Why otherwise should *sthapati*s be called in, as provided in Baudhāyana, for the non-conversion *stomas*? These were not designed or intended for operation on groups for which only a *sthapati* or *grhapati* would be needed. Worst of all was the joining on to the *Sāvitṛpatita stomas* of the mythological stories of groups of Devas (the Maruts, who are non-Vrātyas, with Viṣṇu for *sthapati*, and the Daivya Vrātyas with Budha for *sthapati*) having performed these *stomas*. How they came, conceivably, to be *Sāvitṛpatitas*, or imagined they did, I am unable to conjecture. Were the scholiasts then, after all, engaged in the purely intellectual pastime of "restoring" old and utterly dead institutions and, lacking historical sense, blundering in the process?

I notice here with satisfaction that Āpastamba, a Sūtra writer of the same school as Baudhāyana and later in date, does not lend any kind of countenance to the stumbling innovations of his predecessor (Āpast. Śr. S.XXII 5. 4-14), though he too, as I have had occasion to point out (p. 66 *supra*) cannot avoid touching up the old texts to make them agree with the *mores* and requirements of his times. By the time the very late Sāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtras came to be written, the ceremonies still going by the name of *Vrātyastoma* have apparently shed all their distinctive Vrātya features original or accreted; for the

43 And even more so in Kātyāyana's, as the texts quoted in the previous note show. Kātyāyana's confusion is the more remarkable in that he expresses better than the others the feature which specially distinguishes the first from the other *stomas*, namely that it was a group ceremony; for he says, ब्रात्यगणस्य ये सम्पादयेयु स्ते प्रथमेन यजेरन्; Kātya Śr. S. XXII 4.4.

*Vṛātyastoma* of this Sūtra work is seen to be just a common place *svarga-kāma* ceremony (Sāṅkhā. Śr. S. XIV 69-72) in which according to the commentator (Varadattasūta Ānartīya) यः कश्चित् त्रैबर्णिको अधिकारी, that is, "any one of any of the three *dvija* *varnas* may perform it". The Sāṅkhāyana *Vṛātyastoma* is also seen to admit of varieties, but these are determined by the particular local domicile in heaven of the gods whose company the worshipper is specially affecting.

But although I have been constrained to condemn and criticise some of the Baudhāyana texts from certain points of view, this must not be understood to detract from the extreme value I attach from the historical standpoint to all these texts without exception. The liberties which the Sūtra writers take with the *Vṛātyastoma* texts and ceremonies, whether inept or sensible, are all seen to possess historical significance, besides being interesting in one way or another. The more "incongruities" the texts present, the more suggestive, as a rule, they turn out to be from the historical point of view.

I have already acknowledged the sterling value of his account of the Conversion *Vṛātyastoma*. There is another piece of historical deposit in his *Vṛātyastoma* texts which is equally valuable, illuminating and interesting.

In his treatment of the *Sāvitrīr̥patīta stoma*s the Baudhāyana Sūtrākāra recounts an event which must have happened several generations back, whatever liberties he might have been taking with the facts as they had been handed down to his day by tradition in order to make them fit his purpose in recounting the story. He starts by observing that the *stoma* had been performed by the Maruts with Viṣṇu acting as *sthapati*, and the Daivya Vṛātyas too had performed it with Budha as *sthapati*. The sons of



the Kuru-Brāhmaṇs too, he goes on, performed this *stoma* with Āupadīti Gaupālāyana Vaiāghrapadya as *sthapati*. These Vṛātyas (thus converted to Aryanism), he narrates, thereupon go to Pāñchāla, disregarding the counsel to the contrary of their own parents who warned them that they would thereby be only inviting discourteous treatment from the Pāñchālas. The converts meet Keshino Dālvyā, when he is seen performing the वहिस्पवमान (a *soma* ceremony) in which purifying act, with the zeal and self-importance of the neophyte, Gaupālāyana immediately asks to be allowed to participate. There happened to be present a local (apparently converted) Vṛātya leader (अनूचान), one Gandharvāyana Baleya Āgniveśya, who enquires of Gaupālāyana who might be the people accompanying him. "We are the Maruts", answers Gaupālāyana and, to the further question as to who was their *sthapati*, replies "I, Viṣṇu" ! Gandharvāyana thereupon roundly tells him that that was the wrong *stoma* (परोक्षाव्रत) which they had been induced to go through by one who did not know his business. "It is you who are ignorant," retorts Gaupālāyana who now realises the wisdom of his father's advice ; and in the excess of his rage forthwith pronounces on Gandharvāyana the curse, namely, that his descendants will be a sinful lot. And so it happened, says the Sūtra-kāra ; for Gandharvāyana's family which till then was a most highly placed one (महाकुलं ह तत्पुरा) became thereafter a byword for sinfulness (पापायिता इव बभूव) (Baudha Śr. S. XVIII 26).

The Sūtra-kāra thus appears to have cast his vote in favour of Gaupālāyana and against Gandharvāyana. My previous comments on these texts if valid would however go to prove that Gaupālāyana as well as the Sūtra-kāra were both hopelessly out of their reckoning, because the

*Sāvitṛipatita stoma* could have no application to Vṛātyas not yet formally taken into the Aryan communion<sup>44</sup>

The chief value of the story lies, however, in the proof it furnishes of the vigorous proselytising movement in favour of the Neo-Aryanism which, having sprung into existence and attained such signal success in the land of its birth, by this movement, rolled back the originally thin stream of Vedic Aryanism upon itself, transformed however now into a mighty flood through its capture by a river fed by many tributaries. Why nevertheless I designate the resulting system "Neo-Aryanism" (and not Neo-Non-Aryanism), I shall try to establish and justify in the sequel.

I cannot however regard the subject of Sūtas and Māgadhas and the evidence which the Vṛātya's connection with them supplies for locating his habitat in the East as closed without noticing one other reference from the Atharva Veda, all the more so as the reference will enable me to point morals of other descriptions, which are equally close to my heart.

The 22nd Sūkta of Book V the AV has for its subject-matter a charm against fever (*takman*). The Sūkta speaks of the country of the Mūjavants, the Mahāvṛṣas and the Bahlikas as the *oka* (home) of this fever. A great part of this charm consists in wishing the fever away to strange or disliked people and to strange and disliked regions ; and

<sup>44</sup> Would it be really wrong to suggest that the Baudhāyana Sūtrākāra's preference for the *Sāvitṛipatita stoma* over the Conversion *stoma* was not at all a blundering one, but deliberate, since the *Sāvitṛipatita stoma* brought in *dakṣiṇā* to the Brāhmaṇs, which the other *stoma* could not ? If conversion of Non-Aryans should be supposed to have been still a living practice in this Sūtrākāra's time (I have doubted it), then the Brāhmaṇs must by that time have gotten over their original squeamishness in the matter of contact with the converts' sins of their unregenerate state.

the regions which are thus specifically chosen to wish the fever away to include Aṅga and Magadha !

If the Atharva Veda as a whole was, as I have claimed for it, the *vade mecum* of Brāhmaṇ priests officiating in Vrātya land, how comes it then that Aṅga and Magadha, which I have repeatedly affirmed to be this land or the principal part of it at all events, should come to be treated in a Sūkta of this same Veda as a land of foreign devils to which fevers and other like plagues were most appropriately directed and consigned ?

I must not be understood to have ever suggested that this same *vade mecum* of the Aryan priests officiating in Atharva land was prepared and composed once and for all, like Justinian's Pandects, under the very eyes of the Great Vrātya himself. It was the professional necessity of the Brāhmaṇ officiating priests which started this collection ; and this collection drew into itself additions with the expansion and extension of the priests' operations. The great Vrātya or his Rājanya following had nothing to do with its actual composition or compilation. If any portion of it appears to be propaganda composed for the benefit of the King and the priestly order (a great deal of it is frankly the one or the other or both), it was the priestly order itself which was exclusively responsible for it. In a *vade mecum* prepared by priests whose original homes were in the Aryan West and who had their own welfare as much at heart as that of the indigenous population in their priestly charge, is it any wonder that there should be found quite a respectable number of *mantras* and other materials of purely Aryan origin, and that these (more than the local material which had perforce to undergo "rishification") would be likely to be deposited in exactly the shape in which they were brought down from the home-lands of the priests ? There can be no doubt then that this *takman*

charm was one of these imported articles, and the chief reason why it was able to secure a place in the collection was no doubt its proved efficacy as a charm against kinds of fevers which prevailed in the Aryan as well as in the Vrātya countries. And, from the very natural fear of the charm suffering in point of efficacy through mutilation, it would also be proof against alterations which to more sophisticated minds might appear politic or advisable to make it fit into the new surroundings in which it got introduced. Thus whatever other efficacy a charm may have or not, it does, at all events, operate very effectively as a charm against its own mutilation. The *takman*-charm thus remains a standing example of a fossil deposit from Aryan land (originating at a time when the AV collection had not yet been made) carried into Atharva land by immigrant Aryan priests, and by them left embedded in the Ātharvanic collection of hymns and *mantras*. So deposited, it is a piece of the most tell-tale "incongruity", for apart from what has been stated above it is instructive as showing the large part the spell-incantation-imprecation-sorcery motive played in the beliefs and opinions even of the Vedic Aryans, though, clearly again, in nothing like the degree or proportion of its prevalence amongst the indigenous population of Atharva land. I have taken pains to establish that the AV had to be a very mixed compilation from necessity, and was by no means the accidental jumble which European scholars have taken it for. It also had to be Aryan and Non-Aryan in different degrees and proportions. It had to contain *inter alia* a respectable body of purely Aryan materials which would retain their pristine purity, not standing in need of further "rishification", whilst the brunt of that transformatory process would necessarily fall on the proportionately very much larger Non-Aryan material.

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The paradoxical situation thus arises that it should be possible by the application of the "incongruity" test to isolate the purely Aryan element in the Atharva Veda more easily and satisfactorily than would be found feasible if a similar attempt was made to isolate and separate the purely Non-Aryan.

Another moral I wish to point before I leave this *takman*-charm Sūkta is that the health of Northern India (the longing for the "beautiful tracts" whereof, according to Weber, might have been one of the chief incentives of the Aryan mass-immigration which he imagines to have been the cause of the spread of "Aryan culture" over the continent) was not vastly different from what it is to-day. Fever, malarial and non-malarial, were of such prevalence in Aryan as well as in Vṛātya land, that emigrants from the former to the latter land had to carry in their scarves (*uttarīyas*) fever-charms of proved efficacy in the same way as Government servants on tour in Bengal are found to-day carrying in their suit-cases quinine tablets and chlorodyne for analogous reasons. This fever-charm and other similar disease charms in the AV demonstrate this mass-emigration hypothesis to be in a very great measure a myth. Most of the Anūpadeśa was already populated and cultivated. The Videgha Māthava legend says so of this land, barring of course the marshland on the other side of the Sadānirā, which too, though spoken of as "very uncultivated" could not thus have been entirely so, for Videgha Māthava, the adventurous trekker was no cultivator but a Rājanya and would not have chosen this country as his "abode" had it been unoccupied and unproductive. There is no reason for supposing that by making this country his "abode" he did anything but impose himself in the approved Rājanya style upon the local cultivating population for the purpose of maintaining peace (which perhaps only he and adventurers



like him initially came to disturb) and thereby earned his legitimate *śāstric* sixth.

The concluding moral to draw from this fever-charm Sūkta is a warning to the reader not to take seriously the statement about certain remote North Western tracts being the *oka* (abode) of these fevers. The Mājavants, the Mahāvṛṣas and the Bahlikas<sup>45</sup> were no more the *oka* of these fevers than were France and Italy the special breeding grounds of the "French disease" and the "Italian disease" respectively. What the Sūkta does conclusively demonstrate is that the fevers were natives, at least of the places from which they so much needed to be wished away.

<sup>45</sup> These areas are now parts of Kāshmir and Jammu.

## Section X

### The Origin and Development of Indo-Aryan Literature.

#### The “*Smṛti*” and “*Śruti*”<sup>46</sup> Stages of that Literature. The Redaction-Renascence.

I have already sufficiently indicated my thesis concerning this part of my writings, which is that the thin stream of Vedic Aryanism trickling eastward into Vṛātya land mingled with the swelling Ātharvaṇic river which itself was fed by many tributaries. The result was a mighty flood of Neo-Aryanism which taking a western direction spread over and submerged the Vedic Aryan settlements, seriously threatening and substantially affecting the Aryan purity of the institutions and practices within those settlements. This result is fully and faithfully reflected in the entire Śrauta literature which is associated with the *Trayā* (the three Vedas other than the AV). So far-reaching has been the influence of the Ātharvaṇ Collection upon this literature as a whole, that the phenomenon which we noticed in the composition of the Atharva Veda is in some measure repeated here too. From most of this literature, it will on the whole be easier to pick out and

<sup>46</sup> I use these terms in special senses adapted from notions current in Indo-Aryan literature but in a way which removes them miles away from the words as currently understood. I found the derivative senses of these terms which I adopt so apt for expressing my views that I have risked a possible occasional misunderstanding which, however, my explanation of them several times repeated should prevent. The following hemistich from Vāyu Purāṇa 59.39 hits off my meaning admirably:

विज्ञेयः श्रवणाच्छ्रौतः स्मरणात् स्मृति उच्यते.

isolate the purely or mainly Ātharvanic contribution, than it will be to isolate the purely Aryan element from the Ātharvanised Aryan material. Owing to special causes, however, some parts of the original Aryan material have been preserved intact.

But before I take up the examination of this literature for the purpose of arriving at a satisfactory account of its origin and growth, it is necessary that I should re-state in plain and precise language the whole of my thesis which has any bearing on this topic.

I affirm that two distinct varieties of culture met and mingled. One belonged to scattered, warring, priest-ridden (but by no means caste-ridden), factious (but racially and in sentiment homogeneous) tribal units, mobile because small and consisting of people whose principal sustenance was cattle and dairy products. Like the communities of Ancient Greece, they were not isolated from each other: and circumstances must have existed, the nature of which it is not easy to define with precision, which established some kind of community of language, sentiment and worship, of social customs and *mores*, so that it was even possible to describe the whole group of settlements by a single name, such as "the Pañcha-Kṛsti" or "the Pañcha-Mānava" etc. The material outlook of these people was bounded within the narrowest of horizons.

Against this was an autocratic Eastern Vrātya Empire-State, of peace and plenty, consisting of a wealthy, leisured, highly cultured ruling race superimposed upon a very heterogeneous collection of castes and communities, more isolated in spirit (one from another) than were the warring tribal units in Aryan land, and sunk too, as a whole, in abject superstition, but not poor, because the land was naturally fertile and fruitful and otherwise

productive beyond the farthest limits of what could be conceived as attainable by prayers and adjurations for prosperity and wealth addressed by Vedic Aryan seers to their ever-friendly and powerful deities. Agriculture was the staple industry of the Empire, but commerce also flourished to such a degree that the State had to provide roads for mercantile traffic. It was a civilization as firmly rooted in the soil as the other was shifting and mobile<sup>47</sup>. The two met and mingled. In what way they first did so, I have taken pains not only to indicate but, as far as the data justify, to visualise in a concrete manner. By their mutual interaction (it will now be my aim to establish) they gave rise (i) to a culture of which the outstanding feature was the *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma* ; and (ii) to the Indo-Aryan literature which, being in no small measure instrumental in producing that culture, will therefore receive priority of treatment.

47 The Aryans started as nomads living on their flocks and herds of domesticated animals whom they followed as these ranged for subsistence over grass-lands and steppes. They appear to have retained some of their ancestral habits, even after they had taken to कृषि and वणिज्य, a change which enables them to describe the people whom they later absorb into their settlements to strengthen their man-power as persons who not merely do not observe *brahmacharya* but also as people who do not practise *kṛṣi* or *vaṇijya*, PB XVII 1. 2. (The original meanings of the very words आय and वणिज्या have nomadic significance). The people in the river valleys (Anūpadeśa) on the other hand started as agriculturists, subsisting on domesticated plants and cereals. It is the latter kind of community which all over the world has shown a special aptitude for supporting despotic monarchic rule almost as characteristically as the former have exhibited a marked tendency to kick over the traces whenever sought to be subjected to extraordinary discipline. When, besides, it is remembered that the Aryan settlements in Northern India, exceptionally, came to be priest-ridden, it is no matter for surprise that such communities should be apt to evolve a sacerdotal literature of the kind which finds expression in the three hieratic Saṃhitās. The other kind of society would equally readily produce bardic literature, such as we find forming

Both came after, and in consequence of forces released by, this clash of competing cultures and politics.

By “Indo-Aryan literature” I wish to be understood to mean the earliest Indian literature which can be directly traced as the product of this clash of cultures. Of this literature, a fairly satisfactory working conspectus was found in the 6th Paryāya of the Vṛātya Book previously noticed. The enumeration, it may be remembered, consisted of the *ṛchas*, the *sāmāns*, the *yajur* texts, the Atharva Veda, Itihāsa, Purāṇa, Gāthās and Nārāśaṃsīs. This list may be taken to be an exhaustive enumeration of the literature at its date. Since then it proliferated in all directions, and so we cannot exclude from it the later literature which is genetically connected with it, namely, the Brāhmaṇas (including the Upaniṣads) and the Śrauta Sūtras. The Gṛhya Sūtra Works also are blood-relatives slightly more distant. But the point which I desire particularly to stress from the very outset is that the Itihāsas and Puraṇas are an integral part of this literature, how integral will appear later. For the present, it will be enough to point

the core of the Purāṇas. In the Prthu-Vaiṇya legend I find indications of the Vedic Aryan settlers having to go to school to an Eastern Vṛātya Emperor of the Anūpadeśa for perfecting their knowledge of *kṛṣi* (agriculture) as an art, cow-keeping as accessory thereto, and industries of such an advanced order that the King has to undertake the construction of *banikpatha*. But backward in the arts and industries as the members of the Aryan *viśas* undoubtedly were as compared with the population of the Vṛātya East, on one point their superiority over the latter is placed beyond question by the PB text above cited (and other evidence of which there is an abundance in the Śrauta literature), namely, in the matter of general education, and intellectuality associated with it. The members of the *viś* had to go through a course of education and discipline, the lines of which were quite well-defined, if they did not wish to sink to the state of a Vṛātya. This is what is meant by the *brahmacharya* which the members of Aryan *viśas* habitually practised and the Vṛātya-gaṇas not at all. (See p. 17 and p. 87n *Supra*).



out that this literature itself uniformly treats Itihāsas and Purāṇas as parts and parcels of itself. (See, for instance, Vṛhadāranyakopaniṣad IV 5. 11 ; also II 4. 10 ; and other references too numerous for special mention). That literature itself furnishes no ground for dissociating the Purāṇas from the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas and the Śrauta and Gṛhya Books as something foreign and excommunicate.

Scholars have recognised two well-marked stages in the evolution of this literature, which may be styled respectively the oral and the written stage. But one with a penchant for the palaeontology of history has to posit the existence of a still more rudimentary stage when the material of what came to be the oral literature still remained implicit in the daily observances of the people and had not yet been self-consciously conceived as things to be learned and taught and made the subject of discussion and comment, as much from the intellectual as from the practical point of view, and to be preserved intact for similar treatment by future generations of teachers, pupils and learned men.

To use notions familiar to every Indo-Aryan scholar and litterateur, the Śrauta literature had not only an oral *śrauta* stage preceding the stage when it came to be written down, it had a previous *smṛta* stage when it existed in the practices of the people and was handed down from generation to generation through the recollection of interested participators or observers who had seen the practices followed or had heard the things spoken, which later they repeated from personal recollection. This *smṛta* material becomes literature when it assumes *śrauta* character through a growing appreciation of the importance of its being handed down intact for purposes of learning and instruction. But I doubt very much if the incentive for this transformation ever arises otherwise than as a reaction to an impulse

imparted from outside, through the working solely (that is to say) of an inner necessity inherent in such practices. For, if the latter had been the case, then the records left of scriptural literature, the world over, would have been immensely more plentiful than we find them to be. But I do not wish to generalise. It is enough that, in this instance, the traditional *smārta* matter became transformed into oral *śrauta* literature through the working of such an external impulse. And this impulse, I shall proceed to show, itself came from the clash of cultures the effect of which on Indo-Aryan civilization, I am now seeking to trace and establish.

Nor, I conceive, does this *śrauta* oral literature ordinarily transform itself into *śrauta* written literature from a purely inner necessity inherent in the former. The transformation is dependent upon access in sufficient quantities to material for writing, supposing the lack of a suitable script has been previously overcome.

I wish the reader now to appreciate the special predicament of a people who have been compelled by circumstances to prolong the period during which the traditional matter has lingered in the *śrauta* oral medium (the second stage mentioned) for a considerable length of time. The patent unreliability of the oral medium for preserving this traditional matter intact would be keenly felt, and failing means to perpetuate them in writing, all possible accessory measures would be devised and adopted for the preservation in the oral medium of the integrity of those portions of the literature at least that had come to possess sacramental value. This is what admittedly happened to the Mantra and Yajña Samhitās.

But the continued successful application of measures for the preservation intact of literary material in the oral medium depends on so many uncertain factors that the

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preservation of any particular piece of material for generations, till it gets fixed in the written medium, must largely be a matter of an exceptional combination of lucky circumstances. Further these measures are no guarantees against opinion changing from time to time as to what is important and what not. Thus material which originally was considered of no importance would later assume such importance and what was once viewed as important would cease to be so regarded. For all these reasons, though I have the greatest respect for the industry that has been devoted to determining the ages of the texts by the application of linguistic and other like criteria (metre, for instance), and although where, by the application of such tests, a text has in fact been found to be old the necessary implication is that the material must be at least that much old, the tests are not conclusive that the material of even such a text is not much older ; and the fact that the language of a text appears by these tests to be recent is by no means conclusive that the material itself is equally recent. Thus though the Purāṇas may be confidently said to have at no time acquired sacramental value, and there never was any incentive or attempt made to preserve them in the way there was as regards the Mantra literature, it cannot be said with equal confidence that the material they contain are all as recent in origin as when for the first time they took shape as written literature. On the face of them they contain much original traditional material handed down without substantial mutilation from very early times. I would therefore warn the younger generation of students of this literature against a blind, uncritical and virtually mechanical reliance on these tests. They have, in legal language, corroborative and not independent value.

Bearing these general consideration in mind, the hypothesis which gives every available piece of evidence

its due place and weight, and appears at the same time to account for every incongruity found and every difficulty experienced by scholars in understanding, explaining and orientating that evidence is the hypothesis that the first Collection of traditional (in my sense) *Smārta* material to be transformed (in my sense again) into oral *śrauta* literature was the material which later found written shape in the extant recensions of the Atharva Veda. The incentive came when the Aryan Brāhmaṇs migrating into Atharva land took up professionally the priests' jobs hitherto performed by the Sūtas and the Māgadhas, and had to learn how these jobs were to be properly performed. The fact that the manner of doing these jobs had to be rationalised in the Brāhmaṇic sense and "rishified" imparted to the Collection the flavour of literature even more than would have been the case if the Brāhmaṇs had taken to doing their priests' work in exactly the manner in which it used to be done by the Sūtas and the Māgadhas.

But it should be specially remarked that the Brāhmaṇs could not possibly have a very high regard for the work which they took up thus as a matter of business pure and simple. For some of the work they had to do, they not improbably felt patronising contempt. It may be safe to affirm therefore that although this Collection became *śrauta* literature in my sense, neither then nor for generations to follow (not until in fact the original purpose of the Collection had been utterly forgotten) would this literature in their eyes (not to speak of their fellow Brāhmaṇs' in Aryan land) assume canonical authority and become *śrauta* in the technical sense. Nor, It may be affirmed with equal confidence, would the claim be immediately put forward of the Atharva Veda being the one and only Brahma Veda by the priests of this Veda, so long at least as they still remembered when and how

the Collection came to be made. Nor, equally, as the Collection did not touch or concern directly or indirectly the lives and practices of the Vedic Aryans, whether in the Ātharvan or in the Aryan land, would it rouse any kind of protest or opposition from this or indeed from any quarter. That two such apparently contrasting bodies of *mantras* and practices such as are to be found in the *Trayī* on the one hand and in the Atharva Veda on the other, should have existed side by side for such a long age without leaving any visible trace of intolerance felt by either against the other (evidence of actual conflict there is none) ceases, upon my hypothesis, to be the extraordinary thing it has appeared to be in the eyes of many European scholars.

It is also necessary to note here that the Ātharvāṇic practices are not *śrauta* in another technical sense of the term. They are almost without exception *grhya* and not *śrauta* in character, so that in later times when the Atharva Veda had assumed canonicity and good form seemed to require that it should have Brāhmaṇas and other Śrauta appendices of the usual sort, after the manner of the other Samhitās, this could not be arranged for without wholesale borrowings from those others, and chiefly from the R̥gVeda. The Priests' Manual in demand was entirely for use at ceremonies to be performed in the interest of the *yajmāns*, be they the common folk, the nobility or the Great King himself. They all partook of the nature of ceremonies which the priests would be called upon to perform in households of the *yajmāns*. No demand for organising hieratic ceremonies of the Vaitāṇic order would naturally arise in Vrātya land till the immigrant Brāhmaṇs became sufficiently numerous to be able to found independent schools and free-masonries of priests engaged fairly exclusively in hieratic ceremonies, and dependent therefore in the main



upon *vr̥ttis* provided by the King and rich men belonging to the laity. To put it in more familiar language, no provision was made for the holding and regulating of hieratic *sat̥tras* and *yajñas* in the Atharva Veda because Colleges of Priests for whose use only they would have to be provided had not come into existence, and so far as the authors of the Manual could foresee, would not come into existence for long years to come.

A further very noticeable feature is that the *gr̥hya* ritual matter contained in the Atharva Veda shows no correspondence worth speaking of with the *gr̥hya* material in the Sūtras of that name.<sup>48</sup> The Atharva Veda seems to favour the out-of-the-way, the occasional, the optional, the bizarre : the normal, the usual and the ordinary being almost entirely disregarded ; whilst the Gr̥hya Books are seen to confine themselves (otherwise than very exceptionally) to the normal, the usual and the orderly aspects of the daily life of the typical householder : birth, confirmation, discipleship, arrival in man's state, marriage, householdership, procreation of children, death and the ceremonies following thereon, and the more tinged they are with the lustre of piety, the fitter they appear to be for treatment in these Books. As Bloomfield happily puts it, the Gr̥hya-Books concern themselves almost exclusively with the *nītyakarmāṇi*, the Atharva Veda being on the other hand concerned with the *naimittika* and the *kāmya*.

The same author also remarks, with surprise, upon the absence in any marked degree of any special literary relationship between the Atharva Veda and the Gr̥hya Books, occupied as both are in dealing with *gr̥hya* (as opposed to *śrauta*) *karmāṇi*. This would indeed be a

<sup>48</sup> Whatever correspondence there is, is plainly the result of direct borrowing from the Atharva Veda.

matter for surprise if both were depicting aspects in the religious life of one and the same household. Upon such an assumption, one would be excused for imagining that the Atharva Veda and the Gṛhya Works, from the very start, entered into a solemn pact for dividing their fields of labour, so that neither would poach into the other party's preserve ! Sūtra writers, amongst themselves, might overrun their own allotted field twenty times over, but as to overstepping this boundary and trespassing into the Ātharvanic cabbage-patch, that not one of them must ever think of doing ; and *vice versa*.

The fact however is that the Gṛhya Works and the AV were concerned with two entirely different households, each evolved in a habitat entirely distinct from that of the other. The Gṛhya Books had to do with the domesticities of the householder in the Vedic Aryan *viś*, the AV was concerned with those of the folk in Vrātya land. The ordered religious life following well-marked stages punctuated by special ceremonies, which was evolved in the compact and quite simple surroundings of the small Vedic Aryan settlements, did not exist in Atharva land, until it was at a much later age imported there from its native homes and took hold, under Bhrahmanic schooling, if indeed it ever did that to any appreciable extent. At the date when the Atharva Veda was composed, the ordinary routine life of the householder in Vrātya land had (I am convinced from the material of the AV itself) no such religious significance as the routine life of the Vedic Aryan householder. His whole religious outlook was occupied in fending off or overcoming the enemies known and unknown whom even the Great Vrātya's Peace could not forfend or prevent from lurking around in order to compass harm for him and his family, and in guarding against and expiating sins and contamina-

tions from *enas* more fearful even than ghosts, devils, sorcerers, witches, snakes and man-eaters, all of which made such a perpetual nightmare of the ordinary life of the Vrātya citizen and householder. The *grhya* rites of the Atharva Veda made provisions for exactly this kind of life.

Fortunately the Ātharvaṇ Collection did not exhaust itself in providing against the superstitious fears only of the common folk. Scenes of ideal loving-kindness even get caught in stray *sūktas* bearing chiefly on the *Strīkarmāṇi*, by way of exception. The Manual had to provide for ceremonies in the households of the King and the nobility as well ; and these partook in large parts more of the *Kāmyeṣṭi* and *Paustika* (prosperity-securing) than of the *ābhicārīka* (imprecatory and incantative) and the *prāyāścitta* (expiatory) character. These evidently had potentialities for assuming hieratic *yājñic* proportions, as they in fact did in later times. But the cream of the Atharva Veda really lay outside and beyond a profusion of predominatingly spell material. It did absorb and contain, as it could not well help doing, a considerable quantity of *brahmodya* and like consmogonic and theosophic matter which the Brāhmaṇs picked up (and so readily assimilated) from the pre-Upaniṣadic speculations of the Rājanyas.

And, as I have previously indicated, it was unavoidable that in a Collection made by Brāhmaṇs for practical use, some originally Vedic Aryan material would get in, chiefly though not necessarily exclusively, of the order of the general contents of the Atharva Veda (of *Kāmyeṣṭi* or *naimittika* significance, that is to say). Nor can these same Brāhmaṇs be blamed if they included in the Collection matter glorifying the priests themselves and prayers and imprecations in the interest of the priests and *sūktas* for glorifying their Royal and other patrons (these, Bloomfield

notes do not go the length of the *dānastutis* and *nārāśameśis* of the Mantra literature). And as the authors of the Collection were by no means priests wholly or solely (of say the *grāmayājaka* or *pūga-yājaka* variety), the Collection besides containing *brahmodya* and like matter of high spiritual significance, came inevitably to include some very fine poetical pieces. It is these no doubt which when the origin of the Collection had been forgotten proved chiefly instrumental in procuring for the Atharva Veda equal canonicity with the *Trayī* (which at the date of the compilation it as a whole lacked) and special recognition as the Brahma Veda.

Altogether, the priestly compilers of this Veda had no cause then, nor have they cause now, to be ashamed of their handiwork.

And they did not take in the material as it stood. They moulded and rationalised it (from the Aryan Brāhmaṇic point of view, that is to say), impressing it indelibly with the stamp of their own genius, "rishifying" it, as Bloomfield has said.

So completely and thoroughly has this process been carried out that it is impossible now to isolate the original local materials as they stood before the Brāhmaṇs took them in hand. Therefore it is not possible to say now with certainty whether in the result there was an improvement or the reverse. The best I can do is to quote in full Bloomfield's appraisal of it and leave it there. A certain artificiality was bound to be involved in the operation. Even this does not escape this keenly observant and acute student of Vedic literature, which is all the more remarkable (for him and for my views) in that he had no inkling of the manner in which or the purpose for which according to my conception the Collection came to be made.

“The Ātharvan hymns”, says Bloomfield, “were completely ‘rishified’ and Brāhmanised, even the *mantras* and rites of the most primitive ethnological flavour have been caught in the dragnet of the priestly class and made part of the universal Vedic religion. Thus the AV with its popular beliefs poses outwardly in the same attitude of dignity as the RV with the *soma*-rites ; that its Brāhmanical priests handle charm and hocus pocus as religion, not as superstition. As a natural consequence, the Vedic Pantheon is brought down to participate in the common people’s customs and superstitions. But one feels the difference, they are employed mechanically, they have become sterile, and only rarely develop their character beyond the point at which the RV leaves them”. But develop they did when they had got time, and with a vengeance too, in the Purāṇa literature !

This is Bloomfield’s judgment on the written texts of the Atharva Veda. These too must have been the characteristics of the oral (in my sense) *śrauta* Ātharvan Collection. That this judgment can be passed on the written text is proof that it does not substantially differ from what might have been the oral compilation.

Before passing on, it is desirable to point out that this trick of “rishification” is practised on the *brahmodya*, cosmogonic and theosophic matter also, and these too leave behind them the same artificial flavour. One finds this process worked out with some thoroughness in the Vratya Book also (AV XV), specially in the manipulation of the *sāmans*.

In fact, this free, conscious, deliberate and purposive handling of whatever material came under the Brāhman priesthood’s manipulating hand was, I believe, first set going by the Atharva Veda ; and it soon became a settled habit. What further developments this habit finally led



to will be seen later. The *Rājākarmāṇi* did not receive as much of it immediately as the rest, but the omission was more than made good in the later literature of the Brāhmaṇas.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> The *Rājākarmāṇi* are a specially distinctive feature of the Atharva Veda. The Vāyu Purāṇa puts the matter succinctly when it says:

राज्ञ स्त्वथर्ववेदेन सर्वकर्माण्यकारयत् (Ch. 60. 20)

And yet a few verses below, this Purāṇa expressly notes that the Aśvamedha *yajña* is provided for in the Yajur Vedas (It is really not provided for in the AV, though it is the greatest of the *Rājākarmāṇi*, greater even than the Rājasūya. This too, though it receives notice in the AV, is dealt with more fully in the Yajurs). The two *aśva sūktas* in the RV, besides being ambiguous, have been found to be very late additions. The Rājasūya and the Aśvamedha are taken up for further development in the Brāhmaṇas.

I have, after giving the matter the fullest consideration, come to the conclusion that the provisions in the Śrauta literature as a whole for the Aśvamedha and Rājasūya ceremonies are additions made to the previously existing scheme of ritual practices obtaining in the Aryan settlements, under subsequently supervening Ātharvāṇic influences. The original Aryan ritual scheme had no *Rājākarmāṇi* to provide for because the institution (of Kingship) itself for which they were to be provided did not exist. The Kṣatriya chieftains of the Aryan land (whom the Brāhmaṇs made into a principle to sit upon) had no chance of developing into royalties properly so called to whom all persons without distinction would be owing homage and obedience as though by nature's ordinance. Consecrated rulers of the people and the country by divine right belonged to Vratya countries. Naturally a Priest's Manual compiled for use in Vratya land would be the only one to take notice of *Rājākarmāṇi*; the other Samhitās would do this only after this institution had extended itself to Aryan lands, which is exactly what happened. In fact, the Aśvamedha and Rājasūya ceremonies may be said to have pushed their way into the Aryan Vedic ritual scheme by the *vis major* of the Brāhmaṇised Vratya Kings. If this were not so, the Brāhmaṇs could be confidently relied upon never of their own accord to have lent themselves to the inventing of a hieratic ceremony in which (as the Vṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad casually, and therefore the more conclusively truthfully, testifies) the Brāhmaṇs occupying lower seats did homage

I ought to note in passing that according to both Oldenberg and Bloomfield, the *grihya* ceremonies which form the subject of treatment in the Gṛhya Books were originally not decked out with the reciting of poetic texts after the manner of the Śrauta rituals; and that they too had undergone much “rishification” before they found literary form in some stray passages of the Brāhmaṇas and later in the more systematised Gṛhya Books. I accept this view as entirely probable. If then I am correct in saying that these Gṛhya Books have to do with the domestic ceremonies of households in the Aryan West, the “rishification” of these ceremonies was a result of the fashion which was set and the habit that was created by the treatment of the *grihya* ceremonies in vogue in Atharva land by the Atharva Veda in the first instance.<sup>50</sup>

I have now completed my survey of the data which, I feel, justifies me in accepting responsibility for the statement that the first unwritten Vedic Saṃhitā was a

to the Kṣatriyas : ब्राह्मणः क्षत्रियमधस्तात् उपास्ते राजसूये (Vṛhad. Up. I 4.11). These royal ceremonies would naturally not receive their full share of “rishification” until the need for such incorporation should be clearly realised. Thus the consecration ceremony as described in the AV (IV 8) shows hardly any trace of the process. What it came to be after the “rishifying” had had full play may be seen from the account in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. For a most instructive view of “rishification” in actual progress, see the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa’s account. *Vide* pp 61n, 63n, *supra*.

<sup>50</sup> One reason in support of his views given by Oldenberg (S. B. E. XXX. Introduction) should be mentioned at this place. Although after the process of “rishification” had been completed, the Gṛhya Books began to claim special relationship to specified Śrauta Sūtras and through them to particular Saṃhitās, the *grihya* ceremonies at no stage came to be viewed as other than *smṛta* (based, that is to say, on tradition), whereas the *śrauta* ceremonies proper came to be regarded as having been revealed in the Brāhmaṇa Books. There are, it is hardly necessary to add, no Gṛhya Brāhmaṇas.

Collection of materials made chiefly to serve as a Priest's Manual for the newly Aryanised Eastern Vrātya land though not entirely confined to such material, that it had in the beginning no pretensions whatever to canonical authority in the Vedic sense, and that it is this Collection which (after it had gathered into itself canonical authority) found written expression in what is now known as the Atharva Veda.

Such a Collection once made was bound to have repercussions in Aryan land. The texts of Baudhāyana previously noticed furnish evidence of the flow of this Neo-Aryanism of the East westward to Kuru Pāñchāla. The Videgha Māthava legend of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa already noticed furnishes equally cogent evidence of the vestal fire of Simon-pure Vedic Aryanism having at a much earlier period "burnt its way" through from the Sarasvatī eastward to and across the river Sadānīrā, dividing what, at the time the Brāhmaṇa was written, were the countries of Kośala and Videha. There must have been, not long after this tide of Neo-Aryanism was set flowing westward, tracts of "no man's land" wedged in between purely Aryan settlements and the formally Aryanised Atharva land, where there would be a large population of converted Vrātyas with, as their shepherds, Brāhmaṇ priests ministering the rituals of the Ātharvaṇ Collection; but amongst them would be found settled a sufficient number of Brāhmaṇ priestly emigrants (with Kṣatriyas able to provide *vr̥ttis*) to form a College and to perform the hieratic *yājñic* rituals in the manner they were performed in Aryan lands. The supposition that some of these very Brāhmaṇs would be the convert population's ministers is not at all an unlikely one. But whether this was so or not, the existence of a Collection of *mantras* and ceremonies in use by Brāhmaṇ priests, a Collection too

which was unorthodox and lacked Vedic canonicity, would be a matter of common knowledge in the College. This knowledge could not but produce a desire to prepare an authoritative Collection of the orthodox *mantras* and rituals, if only to preserve them from contamination and even supersession by the Ātharvanic Collection with the start the latter had been given from being at that date the first and only existing authorised Collection. It is not at all unlikely too that the Ātharvanic priests themselves, whether they were members of the College or not, would be the first to feel within themselves the necessity for such a Collection and from the same motives. And in the same proportion in which they had felt themselves free to modify and mould the Ātharvan practices to make them fit in with Aryan beliefs and predilections they would also feel the necessity of seeing that the orthodox material was not tampered with or modified. It would be essentially a highly conservative orthodox movement. They, these priests officiating in the houses of the converted Vrātyas, would, it seems only too probable, not only feel this impulse within themselves, they would even instigate the initiation of this movement within the Colleges, whether they were members of the Colleges or not. I cannot otherwise account for the total absence of any trace of hostile feelings towards the Atharva Veda in the Samhitās of the Trayī as also of similar feelings entertained for the Trayī in the Atharva Veda although they all came to be written down long after their oral "Redaction". ( व्यास ) <sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> As the Atharva *mantras* were never taken to pieces, the term "redaction" correctly applies only to the Trayī, as will be presently seen, and not to the Atharva Veda Collection. My hypothesis is the only one that satisfactorily accounts for the apparently strange fact that the Ātharvan material was not even attempted to be "redacted" after the manner of the Trayī. They could not be, any more than could the *gṛhya* ceremonies of the Sūtra works of that name.

Lacking a suitable written medium which would give permanency of form to the matter collected, this intensely orthodox conservative movement would adopt every means available to preserve the integrity of the Collections in the oral medium. And this is exactly what was done ; and indeed the ingenuity displayed in securing this end is little short of the marvellous.

The *mantras* and the song-practices were taken apart, and the ritual practices were similarly isolated. Each division was made over to a distinct college of pupils for memorisation. In the colleges, the special material made over was arranged in convenient compartments, and almost every other consideration was sacrificed to the supreme object, namely, memorisation. There is nothing new in what I have stated in this paragraph. It is common knowledge.

But I submit most respectfully that the originating motive of this strange procedure could be no other than what I have traced it to, as a reaction, namely, to the prior Collection of the Ātharvaṇic *mantras* in the manner and for the purpose they had been collected. This is the external impulse which led to the transformation of the original Vedic Aryan ritual practices from what I have called the *smārta* (in my sense) to the immediately following oral *śrauta* (also in my sense) stage. It is these "redacted" oral Collections which, long afterwards, took written form, but not before additions and modifications had forced themselves in, notwithstanding the elaborate precautions that had been taken to prevent them.

Not all those who have reflected upon this "redaction" phenomenon have fully realised the amount of violence to which the Śrauta practices were subjected by this process. The author of the Vāyu Purāṇa at any rate was feeling it very keenly when he wrote this Purāṇa ; and not being in



a position to realise the nature of the necessity which called for its adoption seems even to have questioned the wisdom of the reputed "redactor" Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa in originating this movement. The following quotation from Ch. 60 will be found interesting for more reasons than one :

एक आसीद् यजुर्वेदं स्तं चतुर्धा व्यकल्पयत् ।  
 चतुर्होत्रं अभूत्तस्मिं स्तेन यज्ञमकल्पयत् ॥  
 आध्वर्यवं यजुर्भिस्तु ऋग्भिर्होत्रं तथैव च ।  
 उद्गात्रं सामभिश्चक्रे ब्रह्मत्वं चाप्यथर्वभिः ।  
 ब्रह्मत्वमकरोत् यज्ञे वेदेनाथर्वणेन तु ॥  
 ततः स ऋचमुद्धृत्य ऋग्वेदं समकल्पयत् ।  
 होतृकं कल्पयते तेन यज्ञवाहं जगद्धितम् ॥  
 सामभिः सामवेदञ्च तेनोद्गात्रयरोचयत् ।  
 आख्यानांश्चाप्युपाख्यानां गीताभिः कुलकर्मभिः ।  
 पुराणांसंहितां चक्रे पुराणार्थं विशारदः ॥  
 यच्छिद्यन्तु यजुर्वेदे तेन यज्ञमथायुजत् ।  
 युञ्जानः स यजुर्वेदे इति शास्त्रविनिश्चयः ॥  
 पदानामुद्धृतत्वाच्च यजुंसि त्रिषमाणि वै ।  
 स तेनोद्धृतवीर्यस्तु ऋत्विग्भिर्वेदपारगैः ।  
 प्रयुज्यते ह्यग्वमेधस्तेन वा युज्यते तु सः ॥

Vāya Pur. 60. 17—23.

He apparently also holds Dvaipāyana Vyāsa ultimately responsible for the *śākhābheda* which strikes him as a most deplorable development. Vāyu Purāṇa 61. 77 is as follows :

एवं वेदं तदा व्यस्य भगवानृषिसत्तमः ।  
 शिष्येभ्यश्च पुनर्दत्त्वा तपस्तप्तुं गतो वनम् ।  
 तस्य शिष्यप्रशिष्यैस्तु शाखाभेदास्त्वि मे कृताः ॥

He, Veda-Vyāsa, should indeed have known better than to have gone to the forest (वनं) for practising austerities (तपस्तप्यं) without completing the work he had begun. What possibly else was to be expected from his disciples and the disciples of those disciples after he had left<sup>52</sup>?

Unlike the Ātharvaṇ Collection, these Collections would possess canonicity from the very outset. The Collection and Redaction of the hieratic songs and practices of the Vedic Aryans would thus be "Śrauta" not only in my sense, but in the technical Vedic sense also.

Before pursuing further the implications of the hypothesis I am putting forward, I wish to draw pointed attention to the conclusion which, proceeding along lines of research of a kind entirely different from mine, was reached by a scholar of such eminence as Weber. He is of opinion that it is to the Kuru-Pāñchālas and the Kosala-Videhas that the chief merit of having fixed and arranged the text of the Ṛk as well as that of the Yajurs belongs.

The *Śākhābheda*, which the author of the Vāyu Purāṇa laments and for which he seems inclined to hold the originator of the redaction idea (Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa) as ultimately responsible, was in any case inevitable, the medium of the Collection remaining oral. But in one sense the originator or originators of the redaction idea were truly responsible for it. They set a fashion which proved highly contagious. The priestly schools wherever they existed, whether in the homelands of the Aryan Brāhmaṇas or in the Vrātya lands to which they had migrated in

<sup>52</sup> I shall later submit that the extreme methods of interpretation and exegesis to which the material of the Trayī was subjected in the Brāhmaṇas were what the latter were driven to adopting by the faulty nature of that material, and this was owing in a very large measure to the "redactory" mutilation.

sufficient numbers to be able to organise such a school or schools, busied themselves in collecting and redacting, for all they were worth, each in its own fashion, to the accompaniment no doubt of interminable discussions and debates, exchanges of ideas and perhaps also of incivilities, co-operation alternating with quarrel, as the Vāyu Purāṇa account itself leads one to infer. A great deal of material which would have quietly and perhaps profitably sunk into oblivion owes its preservation to what with fullest justice may be likened to a movement of Renaissance, a Renaissance which owed its origin entirely to the reaction produced by the Ātharvaṇic Collection. It was, taken all together, a most extraordinary concatenation of events, if one will only consider that here heterodoxy precedes and provokes into existence orthodoxy, a heterodoxy which was set up and organised for professional purposes by the very orthodox amongst the orthodox, a heterodoxy again which was connived at by both the ruling class and the priesthood though neither of them appears to have had any faith in it. If this is what happened, dare we blindly apply European analogies to explain how it happened ?

I need not assume the correctness of the details of the movement as given in the Veda-Vibhāga Chapters of the Vāyu Purāṇa (Chapters 60 & 61), any more than has been done by others. But the Renaissance character of the movement as a whole is finely borne out by these Chapters, though these even are not able to give more than a truncated view of the whole movement, for a most important part of that movement (necessarily left out in a treatment which concerned itself only with the Veda-Vibhāga) was the dissemination of the Upaniṣad Vedānta amongst the Aryan Brāhmaṇs. That the Brāhmaṇs eagerly and avidly sought instruction in this new

learning from its originators and early professors the Kṣatriya *rājanyabandhus* and were actively aided and encouraged therein by the latter is patent on the face of the Āraṇyakas. As the details of this part of the movement will come up for more convenient treatment in the context of the earlier part of Section XIV, I refrain from further pursuing this topic at this place.

## Section XI

### The Purāṇas : Their Special Affinities with the Atharva Veda.

If the distinction I have drawn between the *smārta* and the subsequent *śrauta* stages of traditional matter is kept clearly in mind, it should be recognised that there was one species of traditional material which became *śrauta* (in my sense) even before the material of the Atharva Veda.<sup>53</sup> The Sūta-Māgadha (perhaps, I should add, Videha) bard-priests in the Ātharvaṇ land must have been accustomed to handing over the sagas of the Royal houses for purposes of recital to their children and pupils from before the advent of Brāhmaṇ priests in Vrātya land. But as the Vāyu Purāṇa verses I have quoted show, the collection of *gūhās* and chronicles etc. ("sagas" would be a good all-embracing English equivalent) also entered a more actively self-conscious phase at the touch of the same Renaissance movement. The new Purāṇa collection (oral, of course, still, as all the others) underwent an expansion in scope, since it started the Aryan Brāhmaṇs also on the work of collecting saga-stuff concerning the families of

<sup>53</sup> Is this the sense which (in its own way) was sought to be conveyed by the Vāyu Purāṇa in the following verses ?

प्रथमं सत्त्वशास्त्राणां पुराणां ब्रह्मणा स्मृतम् ।

अनन्तरञ्च वक्त्रेभ्यो वेदास्तस्य विनिस्तुताः ॥

अङ्गानि धर्मशास्त्रञ्च व्रतानि नियमा स्तथा ।



notable *ṛsis* and reputable Aryan Kṣatriya houses, these finding way naturally into the Brāhmaṇas. But the collection of saga matters as a whole appears from the Vāyu Purāṇa account not to have been taken entirely over into Brāhmaṇ hands until long afterwards. They appear to have been left in the hands of men of the Sūta caste who still went on pursuing their hereditary calling of Royal bards and chroniclers of the histories of the Rājanya notabilities. But the suggestion contained in the same account that at the time the Vedic Saṃhitās were being collected and redacted, the *Ākhyānas*, the *Upākhyānas*, the *Gāthās* and *Kulakarmas* also were collected and redacted into a Purāṇa-Veda and by the same agency cannot be rejected as entirely baseless, and as being a mere cover on the part of the author of a Purāṇa for claiming quasi-scriptural authority for the Purāṇas as a whole. For, in the first place, though by the time they are first reduced into writing (a very late age) they have been subjected to very intense Brāhmaṇification, neither then nor at any time before had they been actually accorded scriptural authority. Contemporaneous commentators on the Śrauta literature are indeed found labouring to explain that when Purāṇas, Gāthās and Itihāsas are spoken of in that literature along with the Vedas (as in the two instances I have cited from the AV and the Vṛhadāranyakopaniṣad),<sup>54</sup> this must be understood to mean such accounts of that character as might be found in the Brāhmaṇas and nowhere else. That the commentators are hopelessly wrong in this I shall presently demonstrate, even if the very forced nature of the explanations be not considered to furnish their own refutation. (To apply the commentators' restrictive meaning to the term

<sup>54</sup> AV XV 6. 4; Vṛhadār. UP. II 4. 10; IV 5. 11. Text 2 of the 7th Adhyāya of the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad honours the Itihāsa-Purāṇas with the title of the Fifth Veda.

“Purāṇa” when it is found occurring in a text of the Atharva Veda would result immediately in ante-dating the Brāhmaṇas before that Veda, for one thing). Taking the term “Purāṇa” then in that text and in the other Śrauta texts (it must in the later Brāhmaṇas and other Śrauta texts have the same meaning that it is found to have in the AV text) to mean and include sagas of both Aryan and Non-Aryan origins, the honourable mention they repeatedly receive in the literature of the Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas demonstrate at least this: that the Ātharvaṇic Paurāṇic material must in any case have been brought under some kind of Brāhmaṇic censorship before the composition of these texts, even though it was still left at the disposal of the Sūtas for professional and teaching purposes. And as the earliest of these texts is the AV text, this must have happened about the same time that the Brāhmaṇ priests took over the business of officiating at the domestic ceremonies of the people of Vrātya land (King, nobles and the common folk) from the Sūta-Māgadhas. This control in the nature of censorship was obviously tightened up at the period of the “Redaction”; and a learned Sūta (still regarded as a sort of Brāhmaṇ) thoroughly versed in the Purāṇa lore might have been sent for by the “Renascence” Brāhmaṇs, and “put through his paces”, so to speak, and being thereby thoroughly “primed” from the Brāhmaṇic view-point, was given his teacher’s degree which qualified him to give instructions in the Purāṇa-Veda. This, I am firmly persuaded, is the substratum of truth that underlies the certificate given in the Vāyu Purāṇa to Lomahaṛṣaṇa (a figure as fabulous in point of fact as his alleged teacher, Dvaipāyana Vyāsa himself). This certificate deserves quotation for the delectation of my readers, if not for the purposes of my thesis :

.....महाबुद्धिः सूतः पौराणिकोत्तमः ॥  
लोमानि हर्षयाञ्चक्रे श्रोत्रिणं यत् छभाषितैः ।  
कर्मणा प्रथितस्तेन लोकेऽस्मिंश्छोमहर्षणः ॥  
तपः श्रुताचारनिधे वेदव्यासस्य धीमतः ।  
शिष्यं बभूव मेधावी त्रिषु लोकेषु विश्रुतः ॥  
पुराणो वेदोद्यखिल स्तस्मिन् सम्यक् प्रतिष्ठितः ।  
भारती चैव विपुला महाभारत वर्द्धिनी ॥  
धर्मार्थकाममोक्षार्थाः कथा यस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठिताः ।  
सूक्ताः छपरिभाषाश्च भूमावोषधयो यथा ॥

Vāyu Pur. Ch. 1. 14-19.

"The keen-witted Sūta and amongst Paurāṇists the greatest, inasmuch as he was able by his elocution to gladden the hearts of his hearers to the point of agitating the very hairs on their bodies, came on that account to be famous all over the world under the title of Lomaharsana. In all the three *Lokas*, he obtained celebrity as the talented pupil of the sage Veda-Vyāsa, the repository of all austerities, scriptural learning and *mores*. The Purāṇa Veda, in plenitude, was firmly established in him (the great epic history commemorating the Mahābhārata inclusive), enriched as the same is by (whatever can be said concerning) *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*, and by *sūktas* and *paribhāṣās*, in the same way as the Earth is enriched by grain-producing plants".

Whether this hyperbole does more than justice to the first Sūta-Paurāṇist disciple of Brāhmnical teachers or not it does full justice to the Purāṇas as propaganda literature for spreading the *varṇa-āśrama* cult amongst the population, specially amongst those in the lower ranks. The idea of taking over the Purāṇa literature entirely into Brāhmaṇ hands had apparently not crossed the Brāhmaṇ mind at this stage, but there can be no doubt whatever that during

the period of the Redaction-Renascence, the Purāṇas were partially Brāhmaṇised in the manner stated ; and that this partially Brāhmaṇised (in my sense) oral *śrauta* Purāṇa was still left in charge of Brāhmaṇ-taught Sūtas. This is established beyond all reasonable questioning by the pretence religiously maintained even in the extant Brāhmaṇ-written Purāṇas (the direct Brāhmaṇ authorship of which is patent on their very faces) that the narrators of them were Sūtas.

When the Purāṇa literature finally came to assume written form, it appeared as the most perfect and finished embodiment of Brāhmaṇism in its maturity, with the *varṇāśrama* scheme fully worked out, to an extent indeed not to be met with in any other single variety of Indo-Aryan literature. Brāhmaṇism of the *varṇāśrama* kind appeared in these written Purāṇas like Minerva or Pṛthu Vaiṇya, armed *cap-a-pie*.<sup>55</sup>

I shall now take up for special consideration a reference to the Purāṇas contained in a text of the Chhāndyogya (Āraṇyaka)-Upaniṣad which will not only discredit the attempts of the commentators to foist their forced interpretations upon all references to the Purāṇas occurring in the Śrauta literature, but will be of value in other ways also for the purposes of my thesis.

In the Khaṇḍas 1 to 4 of the 3rd Adhyāya of this Āraṇyaka, the Sun has been likened to a bee-hive wherein honey for the gods is stored. The eastern cells of this

<sup>55</sup> Of Pṛthu Vaiṇya's marvellous first appearance on the scene of his future labours, I quote the following one-line description from the Harivaṃśa as a masterpiece of literary compression.

स घन्ची कवची खड्गी तेजसा निर्द्विषिव ।

पृथुवैश्यः ..... ॥

Sun honeycomb, it is said, are being filled with honey by the *ṛchas* acting the part of bees, the *yajñas* mentioned in the *RgVeda* being indicated as the flowers from which the *ṛcha*-bees are drawing their syrup (मधु). For the southern and eastern cells similarly the *yajur* and the *sūman mantras* respectively act the part of bees, the flowers they draw from being respectively the *yajñas* mentioned in the former and the practices prescribed in the latter. For the northern cells, lastly, the *mantras* of *Atharva* and *Āngiras* are said to be serving as the bees. And what are the floral sources from which these garner their honey? The *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas* !

अथ ये ऽस्योदञ्चे रश्मयस्ता एवास्योदीच्यो मधुनाढ्योऽथ  
व्याङ्गिरस एव मधुकृत इतिहासपुराणं पुष्पं..... ।

Chhānd. Up. III 4.1.

The patented explanation that these are the saga-stuff to be found in the *Brāhmaṇas* does not work at all. The only *Brāhmaṇa* works that had materialised to date were attached to the other Vedas. Another has to be attempted ; and it is stated in all seriousness that reciting of *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* or hearing them recited being the only means of keeping awake when long-drawn *sattras* were in session,<sup>56</sup> this must have been the reason for the composer of this text hitting upon these as the flowers of his *Atharvanic* honey-bees ! Q. E. D.

<sup>56</sup> Specific provision for "*pāriplava* nights", that is to say for workless nights which are to be "killed" by the hearing of *Purāṇa* stories, is indeed made in connection with the *Āśvamedha* ceremony only. But the *Purāṇas* make it clear, as has been seen, that the *ṛṣis* when engaged in hieratic ceremonies on their own account also occupied themselves during the intervals in listening to *Purāṇas* from the lips of a *Paurāṇic* Sauti. The commentators however make a point of the *pāriplava* provision in the *Āśvamedha* ceremony being the one that establishes the required connection between the *Atharva mantras* and



It is true, as I shall presently have to affirm, that the writers of the Brāhmaṇa literature were rather absurdly casual sophists. But even so, I should not be prepared to attribute to the writer of this text the colossal casualness that is implied in the explanation offered by a commentator who actually believed in the canonicity of this Śrauta text !

I affirm that casual as Brāhmaṇa writers often were in what they wrote, the relation in which the text in question occurs is exactly one of those where the author would specially take care not to be casual, not to speak of being absurdly so. What he wrote in such a context had to convey at least passable sense ; and the sense he actually conveyed by the mention of the Itihāsas and Purāṇas as the sources of the honey drawn upon by the Ātharvaṇic texts is not only passable, it is absolutely sound sense. The Atharvāṅgīrasa *mantras* and the Sūta-Māgadha-collected Purāṇa and Itihāsa sagas were in very truth and reality the bees and the flowers of the literary woodland of the Eastern Vṛātya country ! Need I add that these texts form one of the most significant historical fossil finds I have had the good fortune to pick up from

the Purāṇas. But we have seen also that the Atharva *mantras* make no provision whatever for the Aśvamedha ceremony. Its omission from the AV does not of course make this Royal rite any the less an Eastern Vṛātya rite by origin ; and the express provision of *pūriplava* nights in connection with this ceremony itself goes some way towards establishing its Ātharvaṇic affinities, even if its being a Royal rite was by itself considered not sufficient for the purpose. But these are *my* views, not the commentators'. The Aśvamedha ceremony forms a part of the Yajur Veda and it has been regarded as specially distinctive of that Veda in the contemporary Purāṇa literature, a view in which the commentators must have shared (see the verses from the VāyuPurāṇa, quoted at p 119, *supra*). Having done my very best to place myself in the position of the commentators, I still find myself wholly unable to attach the slightest value to their explanations which appear to me to be as forced as they are absurd.

what as a rule provides a not very hospitable bed-receptacle for such deposits, I mean the Brāhmaṇas ? How beautifully it hangs on to the other related fossils, the Sūta-Māgadha deposit in the Pṛthu-Vaiṇya legend of the Purāṇas, the Lomaharṣaṇa-Purāṇa-Veda-Redaction deposit of the Veda-Vibhāga accounts belonging to the same literature and others which it is unnecessary to recapitulate here ! They are all little bricks of such sound material that they give me confidence in my ability to build a firm unshakable structure out of them.

The Purāṇas and the Atharva Veda are not only related as drawing their sustenance from the same habitat, they are parts of the same social organism. They are just those parts of the Indo-Aryan literature which have been subjected to the intensest and the most reckless kind of propagandistic Brāhmaṇisation. The scruple against liberties being taken with the original traditional material which marked the "Redaction" movement (which, as I have said, affected the material of the Trayī only) had no place or relevancy in the preparation of either the one or the other of these two. Both again are found to be highly coloured propaganda literature for the exaltation of the King on the one hand and the Purohita and the priestly class on the other, just what one would expect in the literature of the Eka-Vrātya-Brāhmaṇ Concordat. To try to relate them together as honey-bees and flowers is no doubt in large part poetry. But I would not hesitate myself to designate them as flowers of the same garden, if not of the same bed. The author of the Chhāndyogya Āraṇyaka *mantras* in question was not so very casual after all. He talked sense and history as well as Upaniṣad and poetry.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> If it is the same author who wrote the Sanatkumāra-Nārada colloquy Adhyāya of the Āraṇyaka (Chhānd. VII), he appears from the

2nd text of the 1st Khanda of it to have had a high opinion of the Purāṇas as literature, since to them he accords the title of the Fifth Veda. Nārada in this text gives a fine enumeration of all perhaps that could be learned by scholars in the days of the Āraṇyaka, and it is not all Vedic literature. The text is:

ऋग्वेदं भगवोऽध्येमि यजुर्वेदं सामवेदाथर्वणं चतुर्थम् इतिहासपुराणं पञ्चमं  
वेदानां वेदं ( = व्याकरणं according to the commentators) पित्रं (science of  
performing śrāddhas) राशिं ( = गणितशास्त्रं, mathematics) देवं (science of  
omens) निधिं (mining) वाकोवाक्यम् (dialectics) एकायनं (politics) देवविद्यां  
ब्रह्मविद्यां भूतविद्यां क्षत्रविद्यां नक्षत्रविद्यां सर्प देवजन विद्याम् (the last is explained  
by the commentators to mean and include the art of preparing  
perfumery, singing, dancing and decorating the person !) एतद्भगवोऽध्येमि ।  
With this encyclopædic acquisition Nārada is nevertheless not satisfied  
because he is still not आत्मचित् ; and Sanatkumāra agrees observing  
यद्वै किञ्चैतदध्यगीष्टा नामैवेतत् (Chhānd. Up. VII 1. 2-3).

## Section XII

### **Ātharvaṇic Influences on The Śrauta Literature.**

I have traced the movement for collecting and redacting the Mantra Samhitās of the Trayī to an Ātharvaṇic reaction. The Ātharvaṇic priests, so far as concerned the preparation of the Atharva Veda and the Purāṇas, were experimentalists on a liberal scale, rationalists in a way (since they did not hesitate to subordinate the Vedic religious elements to the more enlightened pre-Upaniṣadic doctrines which they had derived from the Vṛātya Rājanyas) and fairly advanced sophists. Whether the fear that similar experiments might be tried upon the materials of the orthodox Vedic Aryan practices had any part in the ruling motive which created the movement for the Collection and Redaction of the Trayī, it is difficult to surmise. But the fear of Ātharvaṇic admixture and contamination was a very real one and must have been felt as such. The elaborate precautions which were taken (whether they were taken against possible rationalistic experimentation or against passive adulteration) failed however in the long run to keep off either the one or the other.

The extant written recensions of the Mantra Samhitās of the Trayī do bear marks of Ātharvaṇic man-handling and Ātharvaṇic adulteration.

Vedic scholars, by closely examining linguistic and like characteristics along with other data, and the references (specially) to Mantra materials and the manner of their treatment in the later Brāhmaṇa and Sūtra works, have

discovered strata of different dates and different local origins in the Mantra collections of the three orthodox Saṃhitās. Their industry has been rewarded by such marked success, that I unhesitatingly adopt these conclusions in this part of my thesis.

I agree in the general conclusion at which they have arrived that the Xth Maṇḍala of the R̥gVeda as a whole (Sūkta 90 of which is the famous Puruṣa-Sūkta) is Ātharvaṇic in spirit and origin. It might very well have been taken in by the AV as a *Khila* (supplementary part) to itself. I agree also in considering certain Sūktas of the 1st. Maṇḍala (1. 161-163 the Aśva Sūktas) as a late foreign interpolation, designed it may be, to prepare the ground for the "rishification" and incorporation after "rishification" of the Ātharvaṇic Royal ceremony of Aśvamedha in the Brāhmaṇic hieratic scheme of *yajñas* and *sattras*. For reasons I have previously indicated (p. 114n *Supra*), everything bearing on Royal ceremonies in the Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas may be safely regarded as a post-Ātharvaṇic Eastern importation. The last Sūkta of the Xth Maṇḍala of the R̥gVeda contains an open and unhesitating acknowledgment of the admission into the Aryan religious scheme of new beliefs, new *mantras*, and new gods as well. The spirit, without doubt, is the spirit of the Sāmmanasya hymns of the AV and of the Xth Maṇḍala of the RV (which, as I am submitting, ought to be regarded in the light of a *Khila* of the AV) raised to unsurpassed heights of nobility of sentiment. It is the great *संगच्छद् संवदद्* hymn (RV X 191), of which I make the following free translation:

"Assemble, ye worshippers! Utter ye your prayers in unison. Be your minds as one! Behold! the new gods are taking their shares in the offerings alongside of the older gods!



Let all the mantras be alike, let all the worshippers be like in mind, thought and desire, and let them all be one of heart ! Be you all as one !”

Specific notice must also be taken of the *Puruṣa Sūkta* (RV X 90). How often has not this Sūkta been trotted out as according scriptural sanction to the separation of castes, to the caste-system in fact ? The Sūkta undoubtedly proves that its composer had observed and taken note of the existence of castes and the relative disposition of the *varṇas* in the prevalent caste-scheme (along with a number of other disparate objects such as the seasons, curds, clarified butter, sacrificial and other animals !) But the object of the Sūkta is not to separate or to perpetuate separation but the discovery of unity in all this diversity. It is a theosophic hymn, inspired by the Upaniṣadic ideas of the Atharva Veda. And inasmuch as the *ṛchas* the *samans* and the *yajurs* too, as well as those other things, persons or objects, are shown as being emanations of the *Puruṣa*, the original principle (the *Brahman* of the AV and the Upaniṣads), one finds, here in the heart of the RV. itself (as written down), the subordination of Vedic scriptural elements to Upaniṣadic ideas. This Sūkta is undoubtedly a late Ātharvaṇic deposit in the earlier Vedic Aryan stratum.

The Yajur Samhitās too contain much material which has accreted to them subsequent to the “Redaction”. They are part Mantra, part Brāhmaṇa, a mixed kind of composition which is already there in the AV. Not the matter, but this mixed-composition-manner was very probably suggested by the AV. But all the Royal rites included must be of Ātharvaṇic origin. The last Book of the Vājasaneyi Samhitā is pure Upaniṣad and therefore in the view I have already expressed Ātharvaṇic. The

Puruṣamedha Sūkta mentions the Vrātya, the Sūta, the Māgadha and even the *hetaera*. It is the Puruṣa Sūkta trick played with a larger and more complex world of men, things and gods, the Paurāṇic world almost. Upaniṣad-inspired like the Puruṣa-Sūkta, it is Ātharvaṇic in spirit and contents. The Royal rites of Aśvamedha and Rājasūya have, in this Veda, secured for themselves honoured places in the scheme of hieratic *sattras*. These rites, being essentially Ātharvaṇic rites previously unknown in Aryan land, could not have secured these places, if not only Ātharvaṇic ideas but also Ātharvaṇic political institutions, including Royalty itself, had not spread into what was previously Aryan-dominated if not Aryan land. The Yajur-Veda itself thus bears testimony to the advance westward of the Neo-Aryan political and social order which was evolved in Vrātya land. The Śatarudriya litanies, finally (to mention only the most conspicuous reference to Rudra-Īśāna), are pronouncedly Ātharvaṇic. And then the Brāhmaṇas. They literally seethe and wallow in Ātharvaṇism.

Ātharvaṇic technique was and had to be sophistical. The whole business of this Veda was Brāhmaṇisation of material which was foreign to Brāhmaṇism. This material was in some parts superior to the Brāhmaṇ's native stock of *mantras* and rituals, but most of it was such as the Brāhmaṇs could not but treat with at least qualified contempt. The forging of links to connect Vedic beliefs and practices with both these varieties of materials and to present them in Vedic garb would naturally call for the employment of very varied forms of sophistry. But the capacity which the Brāhmaṇ mind developed in this direction in the Brāhmaṇa literature, taking their cue from the Atharva Veda, leaves one aghast with astonishment. Readymade mythology, etymology to order, grammar to suit, allegory, pun (any kind of trick in fact that appears to answer best the

immediate purpose of throwing a Vedic garb round a non-Vedic practice, bridging over a text and a practice, or forging a rope-way to connect one kind of speculative idea with another) would be picked up off-hand and cast away when done with to make room for some other. Invention does not stop at explanations and exegeses only. Customs and institutions are fabricated with equal freedom and abandon. All this bag of tricks will be found exemplified in rudimentary or developed forms in different parts of the AV.

It might have been imagined that when they came to deal with their own scriptural practices the Brāhmaṇ exegetists would exercise due restraint. But the habit initiated by the AV proved too strong for them.

It is possible also that the nature of the material to be explained or accounted for demanded the application of all this varied technique. The actual practices of the Aryans in many places probably did not coincide with what had got embodied in the authorised versions. The differences might have been so great as to be unbridgeable except by such a bag of tricks. It does seem to me moreover that the "Redaction" itself had done its work but too thoroughly. The piecing together of the dismembered and dismantled ritual practices for any particular purpose, after the persons who had performed the earlier operation had passed away carrying away with them the memories of the ritual as an organic whole, must have proved almost as difficult to their successors as the restoration of the Neanderthal or the Cro-Magnon man from the bones (which only unkind nature has somehow failed to destroy) has proved to the anthropologist. The texts, I suspect, grew more and more incapable of practical use with the passing of years, and in proportion arose the necessity (for a scripture cannot simply be thrown away and replaced by anything found

handier) of exegesis of the acrobatic order previously outlined. The Brāhmaṇa writers, like the authors of the AV, became sophists from necessity.

The Brāhmaṇa exegesis, Roth has observed, "does not appeal to the *dicta* of the sacred hymns as its first and most immediate source, but rather rests upon the customary ceremonial and (I doubt the validity of the rest of the sentence) upon the earlier conception of that ceremonial ;" "that it had not the remotest motive of giving a natural explanation of either the one or the other" (Muir, Original Sanskrit Texts, Vol. II, p. 183). And, observes Max Muller, "there is, throughout the Brāhmaṇas, such a complete misunderstanding of the original intention of the Vedic hymns that we can hardly understand how such an estrangement could have taken place unless their had been at some time or other a violent break in the chain of tradition" (*Ibid*, p. 185) The break, violent enough, was made by the "Redaction".

But there was no misunderstanding. They misinterpreted on set purpose. And the result was that the very work of interpreting the sacred scriptures made them develop into free-thinkers and sophists! And the authors of the AV were their intellectual parents and preceptors. These in their turn had learned some of these tricks from the old world Rājanyas of Vrātya land, to judge from samples furnished by the speculations, expressly attributed to Rājanya teachers, of Upaniṣadic significance occurring in the Āraṇyakas. And at each successive stage, the pupils appear fairly to beat their masters at the game. Only compare with the Vrātya Book (AV XV where you will find all the tricks more or less kept within bounds) any of the Brāhmaṇa Books attached to the Trayī.

Eggeling in his Introduction to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa Translation (S. B. E. Vol XIV) observes :  
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"For wearisome prolixity of exposition, characterised by dogmatic assertion and flimsy symbolism rather than by serious reasoning, these works are perhaps not equalled anywhere ; unless, indeed, it be by the speculative vapourings of the Gnostics than which, in the opinion of the learned translators of Ireneus, nothing more absurd has probably ever been imagined by rational beings". I wonder, if the necessity for speculative vapourings on the part of these early Christian free-thinkers was as imperious as it certainly was in the case of the authors of the Brāhmaṇas at all events. They performed their exegetic prestidigitations so very thoroughly that there arose a school of doctors who made it their business solely to study this literature for the purpose of separating the "cream" from the "vapourings" which I doubt if any sensible person in Aryan land ever really believed in. The Brāhmaṇa authors certainly did not ; for they are seen to expiate for the sins of sophistry they had had to commit for the sake of their scriptures by giving free vent to their unbelief and scepticism concerning these very scriptures in the Āraṇyakas. The augurs must, once in a while at least, meet to laugh behind their sleeves, or burst !

It was thus by making their interpretations and, along with these the things they interpreted, contemptible in their own eyes, if not in those of others, that the authors of the Brāhmaṇas paved the way for the ultimate purification of the Upaniṣad speculations from their own not dissimilar tricks of mysticism and sophistry, so that out of this welter at last arose the Free Upaniṣads, the freer and purer for all this catalytic contact with the hocus pocus of the Atharva Veda, the Yajur texts and the Brāhmaṇas in which as an infant it was conveyed, cradled and clouted all the way from the Ātharvaṇ to the late Indo-Aryan times, across centuries of somewhat slow and retarded growth. In the Āraṇyakas,



there are to be found passages suggestive of atavistic reversion, cheek by jowl with others as good as the best in the Free Upaniṣads, which latter the Free Upaniṣads borrow and build upon. If this extremely ill-set-up and irregular float made up of the flimsiest of symbolisms and sophistries was indeed needed to keep from sinking this child of the freest kind of rationalistic thinking, until he should have reached man's state, let us express our thankfulness to the literature of the Brāhmaṇas for a service the value of which is incapable of estimation by any measure not furnished by the Upaniṣads themselves.

This unrestrainedly prolific literature of the Brāhmaṇa Books could not possibly be carried in one's memory, and could not therefore have been meant to be so carried. This being so, in the course of my cogitations over this literature, I have frequently asked myself, if over and above the example and impulsion already dealt with, there might not also have been an incentive of a more material kind, namely, in the greater accessibility to writing gear and tackle, which at some stage in the evolution of the literature under consideration made it possible not only to reduce the memorised Saṃhitā matter (the AV included) into written records, but also at the same time enabled scholars in general to have freer access to these records and indulge their itch for writing, which took the form of interminable exegetic commentaries on the texts of the Saṃhitās. It may therefore not be unreasonable to surmise that the Brāhmaṇas, the Sūtra Books (Śrauta and Gṛhya) and the extant Purāṇas, unlike the AV, the Trayī and the earlier oral Purāṇas and Itihāsas (it is this oral saga-stuff which is referred to in the Vedic and Śrauta texts, not the written Purāṇas), sprang into existence in the full panoply of written literature. But

what exactly were the circumstances that made writing material thus generally accessible, and thereby created what must have constituted a turning point in the history of this literature ? Was it the extension of the Magadha Empire down into the deltaic area where palm-trees abounded, making possible the importation of leaves (and reeds too) in quantities sufficient to meet the writing requirements of the now far-stretched Aryan land ? Was it Bengal after all which provided the means for building the raft or float upon which the Upaniṣad child growing into man's state became the Vedānta ? And inasmuch as it was the Vedānta which in the hands of methodologists shaped itself into the Darśanas (they are seven and not six, including Buddhism),<sup>58</sup> and they (with the commentaries thereon and the commentaries on the Upaniṣads and the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras) did also have need of much writing material, Bengal in the event supposed can feel only very moderately proud on account of her contribution of leaves and reeds towards the production of this immense literature, the Indo-Aryan literature.

<sup>58</sup> See the Appendix to this section for a *Note on Buddhism and the Six Darśanas*.

## Appendix A

### A Note on Buddhism, Upaniṣad Vedānta and the Six Darśanas.

Buddhism's affiliation to the Vedānta is unquestionable. As conceived by Gautama Buddha, it carries the Upaniṣad doctrines to the limiting point, in a sense. The Vedāntist who has ceased to concern himself with *mokṣa* even is indeed divided by the thinnest of lines from the Buddhistic *nirvāṇa*.

It is on the whole a mistake to regard the doctrines of Buddhism as dissenting doctrines in relation to Hinduism which does not, in the first place, mind sects. Buddhistic doctrines do not deny the three fundamentals of Hinduism, namely, *varṇa*, *āśrama* and the doctrine of re-births ; this last appears indeed to be, if possible, over-accentuated in Buddhism. The dividing line between one form of Vedānta doctrines and the doctrines of Gautama Buddha is so very thin, that the Kārikopeta Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad has actually to conclude with a specific warning against that Upaniṣad being fathered on Buddha ! The single feature which marks the original doctrines of Buddhism off from the other systems of philosophy, all rooted in the Upaniṣads, is that it was the only one which evolved under non-Brāhmaṇic, and even pronouncedly Vrātya auspices, the latter again choosing all throughout to remain uncompromisingly Vrātya in that there was refusal even formally to concede scriptural authority to the Vedas which the Upaniṣad Vedānta never withheld, in a

manner strikingly suggestive of the attitude of English Equity lawyers towards the Common Law system. That it failed to find grace in the eyes of the Brāhmins need therefore cause no surprise. But this alone does not account for the intense hatred which in course of time came to be entertained for it by what may be regarded as the educated stratum of Indo-Aryan society, culminating finally in the expulsion of Buddhism from India. This hatred clearly did not make its appearance in the life-time of Gautama who, it should be remembered, died greatly respected and in his bed.

The reason of this growing hatred and distaste for Buddhism is to be sought in the practices of the people who came to call themselves Buddhists and in the unfortunate manner in which the original doctrines of Gautama were perverted by the priest-hood to accommodate them to these practices, with no other object in view than to retain their hold on their swarming following. Buddhism as a creed did unquestionably come to be (in India at least) a gigantic political and social evil. But Buddha's doctrines are by no means dead and may still be waiting for their day, as I verily believe they are. The greatest of Karma-yogins cannot have lived and died in vain.

That the other Six Darśanas derive their substance from material furnished by the Upaniṣad Vedānta has never been in question. Equally beyond question it is that the special doctrines of the particular system which has chosen to appropriate to itself the name of Vedānta do not by any means exhaust the Upaniṣad Vedānta; nor can it be supposed to reflect the spirit of the latter more faithfully than the others. The credit for doing this belongs to my mind to the philosophy of the Yoga-Sūtras rather than to the philosophy of the Brahma-Sūtras. But personal preferences apart, the Sāṃkhya, Yoga and Vedānta systems

may not inaccurately be stated to represent the three conceptual facades of that single concrete organic structure, the Upaniṣad-Vedānta. To the philosophical analyst, the Sāṃkhya physics and psychology, the Vedānta ontology and the Yoga physiologico-ethical dynamics, appear to provide the three tripods whereon the Upaniṣad Vedānta is seen to rest. Of the Upaniṣad philosophy, the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad says with perfect justice that it is सांख्ययोगाधिगम्य (VI 13); whilst equally correctly the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (III 2. 6-8) indicates Vedānta-vijñāna, Sannyāsa-yoga and Sāṃkhya physico-psychology as together contributing the dynamics of *mokṣa*.

The Yoga system has been too readily dismissed by European savants as "gymnosophy." In doing so, they have overlooked the unassailable truth that religious insight, like the scientific and every other kind of insight, stands in need of development by practice and perseverance, and is by no means a matter of pure intuition. It grows and is progressively purified and refined by vigilant self-discipline and passionate pursuit of truth. All kinds of Yoga practices are not to be lumped together as hocus pocus and crude gymnosophy and gymnastics. Scientific Yoga has mental discipline for its object and the discipline is physical only and in so far as it is necessarily accessory thereto. The Yoga methodology in the hands of its masters (not its dupes) has rationalised and corrected the abuses, eccentricities and excesses of *tapas* (austerity) which is so easily and readily mistaken by fools and fanatics all over the world as the very essence of religion, in the result harnessing it for use and service in the pursuit of the Upaniṣadic *summum bonum* of *svarājya-siddhi*. The method, there can be no doubt, has been developed by the usual scientific process of trial and error through mistakes made, corrected and later avoided. Without



Yoga, the Upaniṣād philosophy would have easily sunk into dilettantism. The religion of the Upaniṣads has become dynamic only through it.

The obscurantism and prejudice which have stood in the way of the Yoga system receiving scientific appraisal in the hands of its foreign critics have also led these same critics to make the astounding discovery that the religious ideas of the Upaniṣads are non-ethical (see, for instance, Farquhar's *Primer of Hinduism*, 2nd Ed. p. 49)! If to live in constant dread of a vengeful God or to be perpetually beslavouring a sentimental one, and if besides to be in morbid fear of sin and hell every moment of one's existence, is the state which is implied in being ethical, then the Indian religion of the Upaniṣads is well out of such soul-destroying ethics and religion. Have these critics, I wonder, never come across the Kaṭha or the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣads, even in translation (I am mentioning two very easily accessible ones)? One who has read the Upaniṣads with even a modicum of *śradḍhā* will find it hard to fling this of all charges against the one truly scientific and ethical system of religion which has been evolved in the mind of man for the benefit of his kind.

## Section XIII

### The Doctrine of Re-births and *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma*.

#### Attainment by the Atharva Veda of Canonicity and the

#### Title of Brahma Veda. The *Oṅkāra*.

The central idea round which the Vedānta doctrines of the Upaniṣads (and the systems of philosophy referred to in the last Section which are derived from those doctrines) revolve and turn is the doctrine of *Karma* (Re-births), the special and specific article of faith which is common to all forms of Indo-Aryan religious life, and which is what distinguishes it as a type from all other known types. European scholars are agreed that this specially "Indian" doctrine was unknown to the Vedas and unknown to the earlier Brāhmaṇa Books. But it is not correct to assume, as they do, that it germinated somehow or other in the Aryan soil of the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas. The seeds of the doctrine for which they have laboriously searched the Mantra Saṃhitās have not been found there. In point of fact, the doctrine of *Karma* or *Janmāntaravāda* does not fit in with the original Vedic scheme of Earth and Heaven. It is, on the other hand, seen to have grown with the growth of the doctrines of the Upaniṣads ; and it is difficult to see how the Upaniṣad doctrines could ever have taken any but the most rudimentary steps forward without it. It is indeed the central doctrine of the Upaniṣads.

I have already fully outlined my reasons for giving credit to the basic veracity of the story related in both  
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the Vṛhadāraṇyaka and the Chhāndogya Upaniṣads of the Brāhmaṇ Aruṇi Uddālaka Gautama approaching, as disciple, the Rājanya Pravāhaṇa Jaibali for receiving from the latter the knowledge of certain doctrines which the Rājanya expressly tells him had up till then been kept by the Rājanyas to themselves and had never been imparted to a Brāhmaṇ. One of these doctrines appears to have been the doctrine of Re-births.

The story begins with Gautama's son Śvetaketu who had just completed his education in the school of his father attending the *samiti* of the Pañchālas, where the Rājanya Pravāhaṇa Jaivali, with a view to testing his attainments, asks him if he knew where living creatures went after death ; of the two paths, namely, the *devayāna* which led to *Brahmaloka* from where there was no returning to this earth, and the *pitryāna* which led living creatures through ever-recurring rounds of births and deaths ; of the causes which determined a person's course along the one or the other path ; and of the manner of his transmigrations through various living states. (if, that is to say, he should live and die without attaining that self-knowledge which alone can provide access to the higher of the two paths)? Chhāndogya Up. I. 5. 3-8.

The authors of the Āraṇyakas were Brāhmaṇs and the story bears evident traces of Brāhmaṇisation. Text 9, for instance, of the 10th Khaṇḍa of the same *Adhyāya* of the Chhāndyoga Upaniṣad which concerns itself with the lot of the stealer of a Brāhmaṇ's gold, the taker of a Brāhmaṇ's life and the ravisher of (a Brāhmaṇ) preceptor's wife is on the face of it a highly inept propagandistic interpolation made in the interest of the Brāhmaṇ order. As in the case of the Atharva Veda texts, it may not be possible to isolate completely the genuine original Rājanya stuff

free from Brāhmanic adulterations. But there cannot be the least doubt that the "Re-births" doctrine which is there adumbrated is entirely non-Brāhmanic; and the method and technique adopted to develop the entire theme must also in the main be non-Brāhmanic. The story as a whole appears to be only superficially Brāhmanised. The doctrines and the method of presenting them were essentially Rājanya property. And if, in the previous parts of this enquiry, I have succeeded in demonstrating that they belonged by origin to the Eastern Vrātya Rājanyas, it must follow as of course that the doctrine of "Re-births", the central doctrine of the Indo-Aryan *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma*, which is the core and essence of modern Hinduism, is non-Vedic Aryan, Upaniṣadic and Eastern Vrātya by origin.

How Uddālaka Āruṇi Gautama profited by the schooling he received so as even to surpass his Rājanya master and teacher is well illustrated by the contents of Adhyāya of the Chhāndogya Āraṇyaka (the great तत्त्वमसि श्वेतकेतो Upaniṣada, Chh. Up. VI). The Brāhmaṇs with their keener wit sharpened upon the whetstone of their own Vedic-Aryan theology (a by no means simple business which needed for intelligent handling the exercise of a keen intelligence and considerable capacity for abstract thought and reasoning) so soon and so obviously surpassed their Rājanya teachers that the latter let them, automatically almost, to take their places as professors and expounders of their own special science. The attitude of King Janaka towards Yājñavalkya and the other learned Brāhmaṇs of Kośala-Vedeha and Kuru-Pāñchāla (he appears to have actively encouraged and favoured the taking up of Upaniṣadic learning by the Brāhmaṇs) could not have been an isolated case. The Brāhmaṇs, quite within a short time, appear to have entirely displaced their Rājanya masters as professors and teachers of the Upaniṣads : the

literature of the Upaniṣads bears the plainest testimony to this fact.<sup>59</sup>

If *Karma-vāda* be (as presently it will be shown to be the core and centre of the *varṇa-āśrama* scheme of life, the *varṇa-āśrama-dharma* itself is the core and essence of the Indo-Aryan (as also the Modern Hindu) civilization and culture.

Scholars have propounded no end of theories to explain the origin of castes in general and of the Indian caste-system in particular. It is hardly necessary to labour the point that caste-distinctions are not the same as class-distinctions. Class-distinction is cultural and nothing else, and, being cultural only, readily permits the passage from class to class over the border-line which as between the classes which are culturally juxtaposed cannot be and is not very clearly defined. The boulder and the parvenue do not take long to have their edges rounded off so as to become one with the rest of the class into which they have pushed themselves. The boulder, not rarely, is seen even to succeed in installing himself as the *beau idéal* of the class into which he has entered and to become the dictator of its fashions.

Caste-distinction too must be at bottom cultural. It is class-distinction originally, but raised to such a pitch that it does not merely leave more or less ill-defined boundary lines between the social groups but creates chasms which it needs little short of a miracle or a supreme *tour de*

<sup>59</sup> It is remarkable that the only post-Upaniṣadic Darśana based upon Upaniṣadic speculations which shaped itself entirely in Rājanya (and Eastern Vṛātya Rājanya) hands, namely, Buddhism, was led to take up such extreme positions that it failed to secure a place in the recognised group of Darśanas.



force to bridge over. The difference must in every such case arise out of circumstances which create strong and insuperable aversion in one class for the other, which not rarely again is fully reciprocated by that other. There have been other historic instances, besides the Indian, of caste-divisions of this type, e.g. that which obtained between the Patricians and the Plebs in the early days of Rome, between the Citizens and the Helots in Sparta, and one other which is a living institution to-day (like the Indian), that between the Negroes and the Whitemen in the United States of America. Caste-distinction, I confess, does not strike me as such a "singular", "monstrous" or "unnatural" phenomenon that explanation of it must be sought in some special kind of "original sin" ingrained in the character of the people amongst whom it flourishes, or in some deeply hidden capacity for exploitation and intrigue belonging to the people in the superior strata and an equally mysterious capacity in the others to be led by the nose by the former. Given the special circumstances (which need not be the same in every case), "caste"-distinction is as natural and as psychologically determined a social phenomenon as "class"-distinction.

Caste exists to-day in India and has incontestably so existed for ages past; and one has to accept it as a fact as one must accept every other matter of fact and observation. I must also be content to assume that special circumstances existed which gave birth to it. What really interests me in the present context is another fact which stares every investigator in the face the moment he begins turning over the pages of early Indo-Aryan literature, namely, that the Vedic Aryans originally had two aristocratic classes, the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas; but neither between them *inter se* nor between them and the rest of

the *viś* was the distinction anything but a class-distinction. The Brāhmaṇs and Kṣatriyas were office-holders (*chinovniki* of sorts) rather than castes. The same family, Muir's collection of texts seems to bear out, might furnish holders of both offices, and those of the family who could claim no such distinction were presumably merely undistinguished members of the *viś*.

But the later Indo-Aryan literature is replete with evidence which demonstrates conclusively the existence not only of a priestly caste which claims precedence (and is without opposition from any quarter allowed to do so) over a caste, again, of Rājanyas or Kṣatriyas, but further that the rest of the population instead of forming the non-descript *viś* or even two distinguishable *viś*-groups thereof (answering the Vaiśya and Śūdra *varṇa* classification) were compartmented into a multitude of caste-guilds, each self-contained, and to an outside observer presenting no principle whatever of a classification more precise than the very vague one indicated by the terms Vaiśya and Śūdra). The theoretical classification of this caste-pulverised people into the four principal *varṇas*: Brāhmaṇ, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya (his last is simply a grammatical derivative from *viś*), Śūdra had proved so little informative that the schematists could not rest there, and proceeded to derive all that multitude of castes by a kind of permutation and combination manipulation of these four, praying in aid the *plus* and *minus* principle of *anuloma* and *practiloma* unions (condemnatory both, but in somewhat differing ways) where the other process was found to have failed to produce enough differentiation to account for the whole variegated picture. An unassemblable and unclassifiable multitude of castes is as sure a fact and feature of the Indo-Aryan society of the Brāhmaṇa and the Purāṇa ages as the *varṇa-saṅkara*

explanation is the very obvious *reductio ad absurdum* of the attempt of the Brāhmaṇ schematists to account for it.<sup>60</sup>

Given then the fact that caste came where previously it did not exist, what other hypothesis is so obviously open as that it was brought about by the party who profited most by it, was loudest in proclaiming its social merits and most clamorous in demanding its perpetuation, namely, the Brāhmaṇ? And this party appeared too, from all evidence, to be so devilishly intelligent that he was just the person, by his machinations, to have compassed it.

And yet it is a suprising fact that he who is supposed to have put the fat into the fire and raised all this smoke and smell has left no trace in his literature to show that he himself knew anything at all of what he had so cleverly and laboriously manipulated for and accomplished! For, search how you may in this literature (and this search has been made), it is the fact that it furnishes no *historical* explanation whatever of the origin of Indian castes.

But there is the *Puruṣa Sūkta*! Does it not seek definitely to accord scriptural sanction to the institution of castes and the disposition therein of the Brāhmaṇa on the top?

It has indeed been a marvel to me to find people reading into this *Sūkta* exactly the opposite of what it was intended to convey.

Neither the author of this *Sūkta* nor the very much more closely observant author of the *Puruṣamedha Sūkta* in the *Yajur Samhitās* could possibly have shut their eyes

<sup>60</sup> The Brāhmaṇ theorists had apparently the same trouble over the classification of castes as the naturalists had over the classification of "Species" in recent centuries. And the solution hit upon finally in each case was the genetic one. Whatever else may have to be said of the *varṇa-saṅkara-anuloma-pratiloma* theory of the origin of castes, it certainly shows no lack of brains on the part of its propounders.

upon the glaringly obvious existence of a multiplicity of castes; and the position of pre-eminence held therein by the priestly caste, the Brāhmaṇs. They registered this fact as they were honestly bound to do. But what they were endeavouring to do was not to dig the lines of circumvallation deeper still, but by allegorical means to inculcate and philosophise upon the organic unity subsisting behind the diversity of castes *amongst other diversities of this mundane world*. To describe things as parts of the same body is a most unusual method of expressing that they have ever been and will always remain separate and unmixable.

Need I point out here that the Veṇa legend is just another illustration of this same synthesising trend of the Brāhmaṇ mind of the time when it was composed ?

At a somewhat latter period, the scheming, machinating Brāhmaṇ is still seen putting forward the absurd separatistic theory that *all* men are descended from a single ancestor, Manu or some other fabled patriarch.

Still later, when he has become case-hardened in caste, and has blossomed out into, and been admitted by all to be, the first of castes and has fully persuaded himself that this was so by divine ordination, he is led to concoct the absurd *pratiloma-anuloma-varṇa-saṅkara* theory. But I doubt if even the author of the Manu Saṃhitā himself actually believed in a tithe even of what he has dished out in the first forty *ślokas* of the Xth Book.

Theories apart, the Brāhmaṇs did not have anything to say of the *observed* origin of castes, because they did not have any chance of observing it, not to speak of creating it out of their own hands. They happened upon it. Caste was already there, fully flourishing, a *fait accompli*, in Vṛātya land, when the Brāhmaṇ immigrants came there. It must, at first sight, have appeared to them as most strange and incomprehensible that there should, within the

same *viś* settlement be groups who were in all respects as strangers to one another, more so than were the independent *viśas* in relation to each other, for these groups seemed averse even to inter-dining, one group with another.

All Brāhmaṇ-made theories to explain castes or to explain them away, hitherto considered, are just those which an observant and intelligent people brought without preliminary warning to confront a phenomenon of a very unusual kind, one which initially they could have hardly even conceived as possible, would be seen putting forward for one purpose or another. Not one of these could have been seriously presented by one who had seen it happening and wanted to describe what he saw.

But in the matured caste-system which the Brāhmins lighted upon in Atharva land, they also came across just the one god-send they were looking for to place upon a firm basis that intellectual and moral hegemony which they claimed by merit and which the Aryan Kṣatriyas had shown no disposition whatever of conceding to them, and which they had been contesting inch by inch. Here in Atharva land the King ruled by *jure divino*, the Rājanyas lorded over the rest of the population also by law divine, and the priests too were priests by the same kind of apparently unalterable divine *fiat*.

The immigrant Brāhmins would not be human if they did not seize the opportunity that was thus presented to establish themselves (along, of course with the King, that was part of concordat) on the top of this social hierarchy. Nor are they to be taken seriously to task for having exploited to their own advantage their exclusive control of the literature of the times by open and active propaganda on behalf of the King and the Priesthood (the Purohita in particular). In all subsequent literature (see the Atharva Veda and the Purāṇas), the two are always joined together



in the Brāhman litterateur's orisons, and hardly ever the one or the other exclusively. This in itself is a great fact to adduce in support of my thesis that the Aryanism which became *Varṇa-aśrama-dharma* had its origin in Vrātya land and was the virtual consequence of a concordat between the leaders of the two competing cultures and polities, the Aryan Brāhman and the Vrātya Rājanya.

So we come across the paradox, not by any means the first that has confronted us in the course of this investigation, of the non-caste Aryan Brāhman finding himself hoisted on to the top of, and coming to rule over, a hierarchy of Non-Aryan castes, himself claiming and being readily admitted to be the premier caste amongst all castes.<sup>61</sup>

The fact, for all that, has to be noted and appreciated that the *varṇa*-element of the Hindu *Varṇa-aśram-dharma* is Non-Aryan in origin. But what is distinctive of the Hindu social order is not *varṇa* pure and simple ; it is *varṇa-cum-aśrama*, *varṇāśrama*.

Who brought *āśrama* into the scheme ?

When I started upon my inquiries, I could scarcely have imagined that caste, the coping-stone of Brāhmanism, would have to be outcasted as Non-Aryan and *Allechehha*. But even after I had convinced myself that this would have to be done (however much against my grains), I did not doubt that *āśrama* at any rate would remain a

<sup>61</sup> I have to remind the reader that what happened was that the Aryan Brāhman, Kṣatriya and other *viś*-elements were drawn into the Non-Aryan caste units or it may be into unoccupied places within the Non-Aryan caste order, and not that the Non-Aryan castes and communities were absorbed into the Aryan "class" groups. It is thus very true to say that caste entered into the Aryan world by the back-door of the Great Vrātyastoma, automatically and unconsciously as it were, and not as the consequence of a previously designed set policy. (p. 41 *supra*).

sixteen-anna Aryan contribution, so that *varṇa-āśrama* as a whole could be shown up as a *varṇa-saṅkara*, half Aryan, half Non-Aryan. The satisfaction I was promising to myself for originating a new *varṇa-saṅkara* as also the artistic satisfaction of making an exact equal division between two contesting claimants, I have had however upon further investigation to forego altogether. The conclusion to which I have been forced by this further investigation is that, though the Brāhmaṇs were solely responsible for working the material up into a system which has extorted admiration from such a discriminating judge as Deussen, both the *varṇa* and the *āśrama* elements of this distinctively Hindu institution came from the Non-Aryans (non-Vedic-Aryans, to be precise) of the Eastern Vṛātya World.

The Gṛhya Sūtra works are concerned entirely with the householder, the *gṛhī*. The *gṛhī* has of course to be born ; and in order that he may be able to come into this world under the most favourable auspices, the *gṛhī*'s round of propitiatory ceremonies begins from *before* his birth, from before his conception even. And he has to pass also through his pupilage before arriving at man's state, the state in which he becomes fit to marry ; and it is marriage that makes him the full-fledged householder and *gṛhī*.

The pupilage for the *dvija* householder's son took the form, according to the Gṛhya Books, of being sent to live for a number of years with a Brāhmaṇ preceptor, from him to learn the Vedas and approved Aryan habits.<sup>62</sup> During

<sup>62</sup> This meant that the Brāhmaṇs had complete control over the education of the members of the *viśas*, which it should be noted was general and almost compulsory, for not to have practised *brahmacharya* in youth meant degradation to the condition of a Vṛātya ! Of the marks of a Vṛātya, one was नहि ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति (PB. XVII, 1, 2 ; Chhānd. up. VI 1. 1).

this period he was required and expected to observe *brahmacharya*, and this consisted, to ninety *per cent* of it at least, in the observance of sexual purity and continence. The *brahmacharya* which the Grhya Books demanded of the *gṛhī* in his non-age was neither more nor less than the *brahmacharya* which in one name or another is demanded and expected, in every civilised community of men of all times and climes, of its immature youth. This *brahmacharya* of the ordinary householder was different altogether from the *brahmacharya* of the *brahmachārin* of the celebrated Atharva Sūkta (AV XI 5). The Ātharvaṇic *brahmavid brahmachārin* is a person of quite another order and of other dimensions altogether. The *gṛhī* during this chrysalis stage of his *gṛhī*-hood had to be only that kind of *brahmachārin* which Vṛhaspati, according to the R̥gveda (RV X 109. 5), had perforce to be, separated when he was from his errant wife.

On attaining man's state he starts his own household by marrying, marrying in order to have children and male children. The procreation of male children was the dominating consideration which prevailed over every other in the Aryan householder's scheme of life. How is he to face the *pitr̥s* when he has been finally gathered unto them if he has not left surviving him on earth male descendants in the male line to keep them and himself fed till eternity on oblations to be provided at the regularly recurring *śrāddha* ceremonies ?

No *gṛhī* ever really died : he was gathered unto his fathers, in another place. Though issue might fail to the living, the ancestors never died. Extinction of a line of living *gṛhīs* thus meant starvation to some ancestors till the end of time.

The importance on the part of an Aryan *gṛhī* of procreating male issue can never be fully realised to-day

by any one, even a Hindu, who has not read the Jaratkāru legend as it is narrated in the Ādiparva of the Mahābhārata (Chap. 13). The gruesome experience of Jaratkāru's ancestors as depicted there, which compelled Jaratkāru to marry in order to procreate male issue contrary to his inclinations and convictions, awaited every Aryan *gṛhī*'s ancestors and the *gṛhī* himself should he die without male issue. The living *gṛhīs* found their *raison d'être* in keeping continually supplied the expanding commissariat requirements of an increasing throng of pensioned ancestor *gṛhīs* who (after death and in spite of it) continued to be *gṛhīs* but in another world.

Of course, having male issue only was not enough ; oblations had to be offered at regular intervals and in the right manner too, if they were to reach their intended destination. The due performance of obsequial ceremonies thus formed an important section of the Gṛhya Books.

This community of *gṛhīs*, consisting of *gṛhīs* who were living and ancestor *gṛhīs* who were enjoying oblations in the *pitṛloka* as pensioned *gṛhīs* had no room to spare for the *vānaprastha* and the *sannyāsin*. They were nowhere in the sequence ; for the *vānaprastha* began where the *gṛhī* ended (that is, was extinguished altogether as *gṛhī*), the *sannyāsin*'s state in its turn beginning when the *vānaprastha* has been able finally to cast off the last vestige of his surviving *gṛhī saṁskāras*.

Is it really any matter for surprise then, that the free-thinking Upaniṣadist from Vrātya land felt constrained to jettison altogether this Vedic nightmare of an ever multiplying horde of oblation-hungry ancestor *gṛhīs* to be kept for ever in food by a necessarily precarious supply of living *gṛhīs*, perpetually obsessed on their part by the craving for male issue to be procured anyhow, by fair means or foul, if procreation, for any reason, failed ?

The *āśramas* are "resting places". Resting places to where? To the abode of the *pitṛs*?

The *pitṛyāna* path which the householder took led to the *Chandraloka*, the abode of the god who himself passed through phases. Being changeful and inconstant himself how could he, queried the Upaniṣadist, assure any but temporary asylum to the pilgrim to his *loka*, who as soon as he has eaten through the merits he had acquired by good work in his earthly existence, must perforce go back (so taught the Upaniṣadist) to the earth again, there to work off the demerits he had been accumulating in the same existence, and in an incarnation determined by the nature of those demerits. A virtuous *gṛhī* has no better prospect before him than of repeating this round of births and deaths till eternity if the demerits to his account do not, as is much more likely, lead him into cycles of still worse forms of life.

The *gṛhī*, counselled the Upaniṣad doctor, can make an end of this damning iteration of births and deaths in who knows what diverse forms of existence only by foregoing his craving for the *svarga* of oblations, a craving which has its roots in the love for the good things of this world which enters into and indeed makes up the whole scheme of the Vedic *gṛhī's* life and after-life. Let him by all means be a house-holder, but only (he advised) for the sake of the discipline this state will put him through and the training by sorrows and sufferings it will make him undergo, the better and sooner to make him realise the utter futility of the entire *gṛhī* outlook on life and death, a lesson which he might fail to learn to the quick were he to skip the *gṛhī* experience altogether. But the *gṛhī* experience will come to naught if it should fail to teach him the value and virtue of renunciation and if further it does not incline him to seek refuge in *Brahman*; for it is



only by steadily pursuing this one real heaven of self-knowledge and self-realisation in *Brahman* that one may hope, even in the course of one's brief life-span on this earth, to cheat birth and death of their dues in sorrows and sufferings which otherwise would know no end.

*Āśramas* are truly resting places on the way, not to the paradise of oblations of the *ptṛs*, but to *Brahman*. The *vānaprastha* and *Sannyāsa* are truly *āśramas*. The state of the *gṛhī* can be made an *āśrama* if only he knows how (or is taught betimes) to make it. The *brahmacharya* of the student will be an *āśrama* in so far only as, during this state, he is taught to realise that this state too has to be utilised as a stepping stone, like the *gṛhī*'s, to the attainment of *Brahman*. There is no objection, from the Upaniṣadist's point of view, to a *brahmachārīn* student, if he has been so fitted by his pre-natal *saṁskāras*, passing directly into the state of the *sannyāsin*. Such a *brahmachārīn* is indeed to be envied for truly the *gṛhī*'s experiences are apt rather to lure him away in wrong directions contrary to his higher inclinations. The *gṛhī*'s paradise of oblations, in any event, is a paradise of fools ! Away with it !

The whole *āśrama* idea is entirely foreign, indeed antagonistic, to all Vedic notions. It is one hundred *per cent* a Vratya Upaniṣadic contribution. The Vedic student's state and the *gṛhī*'s were not *āśramas* before they were transformed into preparatory resting places on the way to the attainment of *Brahman* by Upaniṣadic dialectic. The *vānaprastha*'s and the *sannyāsin*'s states, which were Upaniṣadic institutions, were on the other hand *āśramas* from their very inception. Even a cursory reading of the Upaniṣad literature will convince the reader that this was so.

The adaptation of the *gṛhī*'s state into an *āśrama* evolved gradually. But the *brahmachārīn* student was

taken in hand for purposes of such transformation by the Upaniṣadist at quite an early stage in the history of Indo-Aryan literature and culture.

The Atharva Veda makes the *brahmachārin* Vedic student the subject of a psalmody in the 5th Sūkta of the XIth Book. The *brahmachārin* Vedic student is, in this Sūkta, exalted to heights which might arouse envy in the heart even of the Great Vrātya of the Vrātya Book (AV XV). But it is not, as European scholars suppose, the Vedic student *as such* who is so exalted but it is the *brahmavid* (*in esse* and *in posse*) in the Vedic student who is. It speaks of the *brahmachārin*, who generating (within himself) the *Brahman* (knowledge of the holy power) is by such knowledge made one with and indistinguishable from it and thereby becomes for the nonce the creator of the universe, and even of Prajāpati himself ! The *brahmachārin* who is stirred by fervor for this knowledge (the *brahmachārin in posse* now) is not inappropriately therefore the "first-born of the *Brahman*". That all this hyperbole should be wasted upon a stripling student strikes European scholars as supremely fantastic. But consider the mental state of an elderly Aryan Brāhmaṇ who late in life has become conversant with Upaniṣad doctrines and has come to appreciate its superiority to the Vedic. Would he not regret the wasted years of his youth in the house of his preceptor memorising odd texts and *mantras* from the Vedas and having had instilled into him doctrines and ideas which were not merely futile but positively misleading ? For the purpose of the psalmody he was not taking the Vedic student at his then market-value but at the value he would fetch if he made himself from the beginning the right kind of a student who wanted to know and attain *Brahman*. The hymn-maker's wish was, in this case, the father to his thought, and he made it *pour encourager* as the French would say.

To the *varṇa-āśrama* scheme, the Grhya Books, as I have said, gave wide berth ; and it is also worked up but casually and fragmentarily in the Brāhmaṇs. But systematic accounts of the whole synthetic *dharma* are to be found in the Purāṇas and the Dharma Sūtras (Mahābhā. Śanti, 60-63 ; Gautama Dh. S. I-XVII, to cite one of each), (An attempt to delineate it as it presented itself to me fifteen years ago may be seen in my essay on "*The Rāmāyaṇa and the Māhābhārata*" which appeared in the Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes, Vol. III, pp. 361-404).

And the scheme is worked out in close organic connection with the *Karma* doctrine. The merits or otherwise of one's past existence determine not only whether he is to be reborn as man, bird or beast ; a big tree or a mere blade of grass ; an insect or a worm ; a god or a demon ; but also, if one is re-incarnated after all in the womb of a woman, whether the individual is to be a male or a female ; of high caste or low ; have capacity for one kind of *āśrama* or another ; be rich or poor ; be healthy or lacking in health ; be wise or a fool ; be, finally, a Vedic Aryan oblation-hunter or an Upaniṣadic *brahmanid* !

And those who worked out the scheme in its entirety were Brāhmaṇs, post-Ātharvaṇic Brāhmaṇs, after the Vratya Rājanyas had let go of their exclusive hold upon the doctrines of the Upaniṣads. And they did this not under dictation but willingly, enthusiastically and on the whole rationalistically. What I have said in the whole course of this thesis ought to leave no doubt in the minds of my readers that it is my considered judgment that, up to this point, the Brāhmaṇs had never been dogmatic literalists. They were free-thinkers and free workers. They might have been sophists (I really think they were

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rather insufferable specimens of that famous breed) but for that very reason they were not pedants.<sup>64</sup>

To gather up now some loose ends before I close this Chapter.

I have indicated how the Atharva Veda, although it was in my view the first collection of authorised texts to be prepared, would still, from the Aryan Brāhman's point of view, be lacking in complete scriptural authority. But even from the beginning it contained matter which demanded respect. Also, being the first in the field, it set the fashion in so many directions (ways of composition, technique of handling special matters, and others which

<sup>64</sup> Long after they had ceased to be sophists and free-thinkers and had become case-hardened bigots and Pharisees, the Brāhman's still go on paying lip homage to the creed of practical wisdom which their predecessors had habitually followed. Even the congealed caste-consciousness of the author of the extant Manu Samhitā is able to make room for a *śloka* which runs so completely counter to the spirit of the entire collection, whether taken as a whole or in detail, that it will not be superfluous to quote it here, hackneyed though it has been by frequency of citation.

अद्वयानः शुभां विद्यामाददीतावरादपि ।

अन्यादपि परं धर्मं स्त्रीरत्नं दुष्कृतादपि ॥ Manu S. II 238.

Similar passages occurring in the Mahābhārata cause less surprise, orthodoxy of the type represented by the Manu Samhitā and the Dharma Sūtras being still in the making at the date of its composition. See particularly Yājñavalkya S. Ch. 318, *ślokas* 88-92, appropriately put into the mouth of Yājñavalkya who is addressing them to Janaka.

The compiler of the Manu Samhitā, however, very fittingly vindicates his petrified orthodoxy by enjoining upon the King the duty of punishing the Sūdra who would presume to inculcate that परं धर्मं pridefully to the विप्र by pouring boiling oil into his mouth and ears; Manu S. VIII. 272. In the Dharma Sūtras, similar penalties are provided also for Sūdras taking instructions in the Vedas. In Gautama Dh. S. XII, the severity of treatment prescribed for presumptuous Sūdras assumes sadistic intensity.

I have fully discussed) that without actually setting up any pretences to canonicity, it still succeeded in influencing the literature of the Trayī and their subordinate exegetic supplements in highly significant ways all of which I have duly indicated. In the circumstances it could not have taken many generations for the original purpose of the Collection to be forgotten, and for the consideration which so long it had been receiving on the merits of its contents to pass into and become a general recognition of its canonicity. No doubt borrowings and adaptations of texts from the AV in the Brāhmaṇa and Sūtra literature are fewer than from the other Vedas. But that is easily explained by the nature of the subject matter of the AV. On the other hand not one single passage is to be found in the Vedic literature as a whole which in any way casts disrespect upon this Veda. Recent generations of Hindu scholars have affected to question their predecessors' acceptance of the canonicity of this Veda, and, for themselves, to despise its contents. Neither the one nor the other is even remotely justified. Not only was its canonicity accepted without question, its claim to be the Brahma Veda is also nowhere found to have been seriously disputed.

This last-mentioned claim is really led on to by the claim of the Ātharvaṇic priest for the office of the *brahman* or the fourth priest at a *yajña*.

My re-orientation of the AV in the new geographical and historical setting furnishes a basis for this claim which will be found to have been irresistible.

I cannot but hold that the Rājasūya, Aśvamedha and the other Royal ceremonies that were later admitted into the Brāhmaṇic scheme of *yajñas* and *saltras* must have been so admitted at the instance of the Ātharvaṇic Royal priest, and it must have been he who actually recreated these



ceremonies for his master, and with a view to such admission. The division of the work amongst the *hotar* the *udgātar* and the *adhvaryu* in connection with these ceremonies must have been his. His claim, in such circumstances, if made, to be present at such ceremonies as the *brahman* or fourth priest to direct and supervise, and also to act as referee whenever doubts arose about the proper performance by the officiating priests of their parts of the work or the proper co-ordination thereof, would be irresistible. (See also p 67n. *supra*).

As regards the strictly Vedic ritual ceremonies also, the "Redaction" had done its work only too thoroughly. The officiating priests had by it been placed in such a position that none of them could possibly detect or correct the error of the other ; and as to co-ordination of their several parts into an ordered whole that too must necessarily have been beyond any one or all of them. For the due performance of the strictly Vedic ceremonies also, the supervision of a *brahman* or fourth priest who had made some study of the ritual as a whole would therefore be necessary. Mistakes nevertheless were bound to be committed which no *brahman* however capable or learned could altogether avoid. Now it is just here that the intervention of a priest of the Ātharvaṇic school provided the easiest way out ; for in their armoury of spells and sorceries they even had *prāyaścittas* for correcting the faults of ritual practices !<sup>65</sup> The demand for the services

<sup>65</sup> I cannot here avoid citing a passage occurring in the Vāyu Purāṇa account of Prthu's *yajña* (dealt with at length in other contexts) which declared that this kind of *prāyaścitta* came into vogue after and because of the error which was unwittingly committed at that *yajña* of mixing together the *Aindra* and the *Vārhaspatya havis* प्रमादात्तत्र सञ्जज्ञे-  
प्रायश्चित्तं कर्मसु: Vāyu Par. 1. 32). The passage is, if at all, good only for the suggestion it conveys that this if not all kinds of *prāyaścittāni* were of Vṛātya origin.

of a fourth priest at every hieratic ceremony being there, it hardly admits of any doubt that young Ātharvaṇic priests would be just those who would seek to qualify themselves for this office, for Royal as well as other ceremonies. The claim of the Ātharvaṇists to act as *brahman*s at all hieratic ceremonies, so far from being regarded as attempts at usurpation, would thus be only too readily conceded.

It was upon this readily conceded special competence of the Ātharvaṇic priests to act as *brahman*s or fourth priests at hieratic ceremonies that the title of the Veda itself as the fourth or Brahma Veda really rested. But the theosophic and cosmogonic contents of that Veda and the play it was able, on their basis, to make upon the concept of *Brahman* in its new signification of the holy power (the *Ātman* of the cosmos, which is also the *Brahman* within the individual self) must also have, in a material measure, facilitated the establishment of this title.

All of Bloomfield's surmises as to how the Atharva priest came to establish his claim of being specially qualified to be the fourth or the *brahman* priest and also as to how the Atharva Veda came to have its title of Brahma Veda conceded to it fit in, I respectfully submit, better with my re-orientation of this Veda in the geographical and historical setting I have assigned to it than with Bloomfield's own assumptions in relation thereto.

The last subject which I propose to deal with in this Section is the *Oṅkāra*.

Rationalists as they were, the Upaniṣad writers seemed to think nothing of wasting pages after pages on it of what strikes the external observer as little better than downright drivel and nonsense.

The incongruity of such a proceeding is accentuated when it is remembered that the Upaniṣad writers' self-imposed business was to discover the sense or *brahman*

behind facts and phenomena, ritualistic as well as others. When the facts and phenomena and the ritual elements come ready-made into your hand, you, the interpreter, have to make the best of the job. Resort in such circumstances to every trick of sophistry, elementary as well as advanced, false grammar, false etymology, faked mythology, punning, allegory, symbolism, forced analogy, all these and more seem excusable. But resort to spells and incantations was hardly what was to be expected from these rationalists, driven though they were by necessity to be sophists.

And the worst of it is, and this is my point, this spell of spells, this incantation of incantations, is not what the Upaniṣad writers found made for them. They made it themselves. (The Chhānd. Up. III 5. 1 specifically makes the Upaniṣad bees gather honey for the Sun-honey-comb from the *Oṃkāra*-flower !

They could not have made it if they had not been confirmed Ātharvanists. The spell-motive overruns the literature of the Upaniṣads, and the *Oṃkāra* is by no means the only spell they are found to have played with. They, the Upaniṣadists, did not of course make the *mantras* or the *chhandas* themselves. But the word and letter sounds, the play they made over the ब्रह्म, the व्याहृति, the अक्षर are their own. In this connection the study of the first two Adhyāyas of the Chhāndyogya Upaniṣad will repay close study.<sup>66</sup> Being an Upaniṣad of the Sāma Veda, it happens to be specially suitable for my present purpose ; for though the Brāhmanas and Upaniṣads are extremely eclectic in their selection of the material which is to serve them for their speculations, the sound motive plays naturally a proportionately greater part in a Sāma Veda Upaniṣad than in any other. It does, certainly, in the first two Adhyāyas of

<sup>66</sup> See also the same, 4th Adhyāya, Khaṇḍa 17.

the Chhāndyogya Upaniṣad. It may be worth while here to give a very brief conspectus of their contents, with the reflections they suggested as I read them.

Beginning with the usual kind of observations on the *Oṁkāra* the author is led on to his first clincher :

नानातु विद्या चाविद्या यदेव विद्यया करोति श्रद्धयोपनिषदा तदेव वीर्यवत्तरं  
भवतीति खल्वेतस्यै वाङ्मनस्य (The *Oṁkāra's*) उपलब्ध्याख्यानं भवति (Chhānd. Up.  
1. 1. 10).

which shortly means that work done (that is to say, ritual practices gone through) without due understanding of the meaning behind them has not the efficacy of the same performed with such understanding. In the second Khaṇḍa, an imagined Devāsura myth is resorted to to establish the position that *prāṇa* is a higher principle than the senses. The third Khaṇḍa *inter alia* illustrates the way in which highly fanciful etymology is made to serve the purposes of the Upaniṣad doctor. It illustrates also the manner in which the Vedic elements, e. g. *mantras* and *chhāndas*, and the Vedic practices are sought to be connected with Upaniṣadic bases like *prāṇa* and *anna*. The same techniques are pursued for similar ends in the next four Khaṇḍas, but one passage deserves specific reference, namely, where the *Oṁkāra* is credited with the capacity of making good inadequacies of the *ṛchas*, the *sāmans* and the *yajurs*. In the next two Khaṇḍas, two Brāhmaṇ experts and the famous Rājanya Pravāhaṇa Jaibali are seen engaged in Upaniṣadic discussions at which as usual the Rājanya has the last word. The next two Khaṇḍas (10th and 11th) concern the doings of a very remarkable character, Uṣasti, son of Chakra ; but for my present purpose I must content myself with simply noting that this episode is introduced to establish the futility of unmeaning ritual performances, and also how they acquire efficacy only if their due subordination

to the Upaniṣad bases *prāṇa* and *anna* (not to the Vedic gods, it should be noted) is thoroughly understood. I omit specific references to the contents of what follows in this and in the 2nd Adhyāya though these too go to exhibit and illustrate the devious lines of reasoning which the Upaniṣad doctors felt constrained to employ in order to arrive at long last at the pure Upaniṣad of the first text of the 23rd Khaṇḍa of the 2nd Chapter, which is this: *dharma* has three sections: Ritual practice, study and the giving of charity constitute the first section; the very arduous *Chāndrāyana vrata* is the second; and the life-long body-wearing observance of *brahmacharya* in the *guru's* house is the third. Those who engage themselves in these observances reach the *svargaloka* (that is to say, the Vedic heaven of oblations, etc). Only those who are firm in *Brahman* ब्राह्मसंस्थः the *brahmavid*) attain अमृतत्व (deathlessness, that is, escape from the cycle of births and deaths). But all this sound sense is immediately followed again by further play upon letter sounds, the *vyākṛtis* and the *Oṃkāra*.

This should serve to give the reader a fairly representative idea of the bag of tricks in the armoury of the Upaniṣad doctor. But the particular point in it which I wish to stress here is the devilishly adhesive manner in which the Om-Wild-Man appears to bestride the Upaniṣadic shoulders.

The reason, of course, is that the Upaniṣad doctor lived in an atmosphere which was laden with spells. Like Prospero's island, the Ātharvaṇic world in which he was brought up was pervaded by magic sounds and voices<sup>67</sup> from which there was no escaping; and it does not appear

<sup>67</sup> *Caliban.....the isle is full of noises, sound and sweet airs.....and sometimes voices*". Shakespeare, *Tempest*, Act III, Sc. 2.



that the Upaniṣad doctor even tried to do so. So far from that being the case, did he not himself daily perform miracles of argumentation by the mere trickery of word-sounds ? Who was it but he that claimed "*Śabda* was *Brahman*" ?

Now, since there was no getting away from spells, the wisest course was to make the most of it.

And so, at some auspicious juncture in the evolution of Upaniṣadic thought, the idea arose of pouring all the poetry, all the exaltation and ecstasy, all the abstract flights of the intellect away from anthropomorphism of every shade and colour, that have always attended the never-ceasing and never-to-be-consummated quest for forms to express the inexpressible, into the most moving co-ordination of harmonious vowel sounds that could be conceived in the highest transport of his sonic felicity by the most inspired singer of the *sūmans* ! This I conceive to have been the real origin of the spell of spells, the *mantra* of *mantras*, the *chhanda* of *chhandas*, the grand culminating point of all incantations, the *Om* !

And the credit for this unsurpassed discovery must go unreservedly to the Ātharvaṇic priest, the originator and inspirer of the whole movement which produced the Indo-Aryan culture and its special mould and vehicle, the Indo-Aryan literature. Who, after this, is to be honoured if not he ?

## Section XIV.

### The Draupadī Saga. Kṛṣṇa-Mādhava and Jarāsandha :

#### Their places in Indo-Aryan Political History.

All that remains now is the fulfilment of the undertaking given in a previous Section that an attempt will be made to isolate the original Draupadī Saga from the massive Brāhmaṇising entanglement in which it lies enmeshed in the Mahābhārata Epic.

I have designated this Saga the "Draupadī Saga" because undoubtedly she is the central figure of the story. The Mahābhārata world in which she moves is essentially *her* world and every other figure derives importance from the relation in which he or she stands towards her, as friend, kin or enemy. They revolve round her as though she was their central Sun, all except Kṛṣṇa-Mādhava who is so far more massive and forceful that he easily makes even her and hers bend and revolve round himself.

The evidence available seems to my mind to point to the conclusion that neither Kuru nor Pāñchāla ever entertained Aryan *viśas* to the extent the lands between the Indus and the Sarasvatī are seen to have done.

When Videgha Mādhava of the Śatapatha legend started, accompanied by his family priest the Ṛṣi Gotama Rāhugaṇa, upon his eastward trek across the river Sarasvatī, he did not find the country "*very* uncultivated and *very* marshy" until he had crossed the Sadānirā, which in the days of the authors of this Brāhmaṇa was the river

which divided Kośala from Videha. This river must have been the present Gaṇḍak or another river to the west of it (Śatapatha Br. I. 4. 1. 14).<sup>68</sup> The legend makes Videgha "burn his way" over land and water across this tract between the Sarasvatī and the Sadānirā till he came to this latter river which the legend states "had not been crossed by Brāhmaṇs in former times," because "it had not been burnt across by Agni Vaiśvānara". The other side of the river, according to the legend, was "very uncultivated", because "it had not been tasted by Agni Vaiśvānara". Videgha Māthava too, like the Brāhmaṇs who

<sup>68</sup> Sāyana, taking his cue no doubt from the lexicographers, identifies this river Sadānirā with the present Karatoyā which would bring the dividing line between the Kośala and Videha countries (of the days of the Brāhmaṇs) to the border of the Bogra district. Sadānirā is mentioned in the Mahābhārata (Sabhā 20, 27), along with the Gaṇḍakī and as lying to the west of it, as one of the rivers which Kṛṣṇa, Bhīmasena and Arjuna crossed on their way to Jarāsandha's capital in pursuit of the adventure which ended in Jarāsandha's death. It looks as if Indo-Aryan writers came to apply this name to the first unnamed river for the time being to the East belonging to these parts and flowing from the Himālayas towards the Gangetic valley. Verses 26-30 of the chapter will bear full quotation :

कुरुभ्यः प्रस्थितास्तेषु मध्येन कुरुजांजलम् ।  
 रम्यपद्मसरो गत्वा कालकूटमतीत्य च ॥  
 गन्डकीञ्च महाशोनं सदानीरां तथैवच ।  
 एक पर्वतके नद्यः क्रमेणेत्या ब्रजन्तते ॥  
 उत्तीर्य सरयूं रम्यां दृष्ट्वा पूर्वोश्च क्रोशलान् ।  
 अतीत्य जग्मुर्मिथिलां मालांचर्मगवतीं नदीम् ॥  
 अतीत्य गङ्गां शोनञ्च त्रयस्ते प्राङ्मुखास्तदा ।  
 कुशचीरच्छदा जग्मुर्मागधमत्तत्रमच्युताः ॥  
 ते शशवद्गोवना कीर्णमम्बुमन्तं शुभद्रुमम् ।  
 गोरथं गिरिं मासाद्य ददृशुर्मागधं पुरम् ॥

preceded him, did not burn across this river, but he made the "very uncultivated and marshy" country on the other side of it his "abode". In the days of the Brāhmaṇa, however, this country also was found to be well cultivated, "because the Brāhmaṇs had caused it to be tasted (by Agni) by sacrifices".

What must not be inferred from this account is that "burning" meant reclaiming jungle or swamp by the application of fire, supposing the latter kind of land did admit of such treatment. Videgha Māthava certainly did not, for the very first time, reclaim in this way (as indeed he could not physically have found it possible to do) the whole intervening tract between the Sarasvatī and Sadānirā, "burn his way" here too "across the earth and the rivers" though he did. Nor can it mean that he as a Kṣatriya took political possession of this tract for it is clear from the legend that he crossed over to the other side of the Sadānirā and made the country on that other side his "abode." By the same token, he did not reclaim the territory on the other side of the Sadānirā, which at the date of the Brāhmaṇa was found "very cultivated," or take political possession of it. All he presumably did was, with the assistance of his chaplain, to give his new "abode" to Agni Vaiśvānara to taste.<sup>69</sup> *This "burning through" and "giving land and water to Agni Vaiśvānara to taste" meant nothing more nor less than performing Vedic-Aryan yajñas by the settlers for themselves.* To suggest then, as Weber has done, that the Videgha-Māthava legend signified the progressive extension eastward of Brāhmaṇical worship and civilization (which is just

<sup>69</sup> The legend however gives the credit for doing even this not to him but to the Brāhmaṇs; and according to its literal language, it is really not Videgha, but Agni Vaiśvānara himself, whom he could not hold in his mouth, who starts burning along (apparently on his own account), Videgha and his Parohita following in the rear.

another expression for political and religious conquest and conversion by the Vedic Aryans of all these tracts and their peoples) is really to foist on Videgha Māthava and Gotama Rāhugaṇa and their kind the very modern motives of the European missionary and the European political pioneer of the 19 century A.D. I can easily understand European scholars who wrote in the heyday of the "Bible and Sword" movement seeing in Videgha and Gotama a sort of primitive Rhodes-Livingstone combination ; but that does not make their diagnosis of this legend any the less ridiculously erroneous. The country in which Videgha settled with his Purohita was "very" but not quite uncultivated. The territory between the Sarasvatī and the Sadānirā must have been *well* cultivated, if not *very well* cultivated, and occupied. There is no room in the legend for the supposition that the land to the east of the Sarasvatī up to and beyond the Sadānirā was virgin land which the Vedic Aryan immigrants reclaimed and made the home of new Aryan *viśas* of the pure-bred variety. All that the legend is capable of meaning is that colonies of Vedic Aryans carrying with them their own mode of worship for themselves were gradually straying into these lands and settling amongst the indigenous Vrātya population without overt opposition from them.

On the other hand from the Baudhāyana story previously considered it can be clearly gathered that at the same or at a later period (which latter is what is more likely) mass conversions of Vrātyas were taking place simultaneously in Kuru and Pāñchāla.<sup>70</sup> This occurrence, it can hardly be doubted, took place in post-Ātharvaṇic

<sup>70</sup> Anpaditi Gaupālāyana Vaiāghrapadya who comes over from Kuru to convert the Pāñchāla Vrātyas obviously finds himself already anticipated and fore-stalled by Gandharvāyana Bāleya Āgnivēśya the Pāñchāla *anūchāna*.



times. The Kuru Vrātya *sthapati* was, it appears, not a Rājanya Vrātya : he must have belonged to the indigenous priestly class ; for his patronymic Vaiāghrapadya reappears quite often in the Brāhmaṇa literature annexed to names borne by Brāhmaṇs (see Chhāndogya V 14. 1 ; 16. 1, amongst others, for instances) and Yudhiṣṭhira is seen giving himself out as a Vaiāghrapadya, when he personates as the Brāhmaṇ chess-companion to King Virāṭa of Matsya with the name of Kaṅka. (Mahābhā. Virāṭa Chs. 7 and 32).

But apart from all this, the Pāñchāla Rājanya from whom Āruṇi Uddālaka Gautama takes his first lessons in the Upaniṣads, Pravāhaṇa Jaibali, whom Śvetaketu the conceited but for the time being humbled son of Āruṇi describes in anger as the *rājanyabandhu* and for perhaps the same reason for which Sūtas and Māgadhas came to be designated *brahmabandhus*<sup>71</sup> (namely, because they were all converted Vrātyas who had not taken to the Aryan *śaṁskāras*, and not blue-blooded Aryans), marks the country of Pāñchāla down, by reason of its being his domicile, as Vrātya country by original affiliation which later (but before Pravāhaṇa's time) had become Aryanised by the facile operation of the conversion *Vrātyastoma*.

Āruṇi Uddālaka's craving for Upaniṣad learning furnishes us with other clues leading to the same conclusion.

<sup>71</sup> In the Chhāndogya Up. VI 1. 1. Āruṇi Uddālaka himself is made to employ the term "*brahmabandhu*" in the following context: Addressing his son the same Śvetaketu he says: "My son, follow the course of the Vedic student; for in our family the unlearned is regarded as a *brahmabandhu*".

The Sūta-Māgadha Vrātya Brāhmaṇs, I have shown, had no call to and did not follow the Vedic Aryan *grhya* practices, amongst which leading the life during nonage of a *brahmachārī* Vedic student was, in the case of all *dvijas*, regarded as of prime importance. See *supra* p. 102 n.

The Kauṣītakyopaniṣad shows him as going for light to another *rājanyabandhu*, one Chitra. He it is again who leads five *gṛhīs*, all महाशालाः (owners of many houses) and महाश्रोत्रियाः (highly learned in the Śrutis), who had come to him for initiation into the mysteries of the *Ātman* and the *Brahman*, to one whom he considers to be a better Upaniṣad teacher. Two of these *gṛhīs* bear the patronymic of Vaiāghrapadya. Like Āruṇi and Śvetaketu, these Vaiāghrapadyas were apparently not people to lay themselves open to being ranked as *brahmabandhus*. The Upaniṣad doctor however whom they are taken to is a third *rājanyabandhu*, one Aśvapati, son of Kekaya. These two *rājanyabandhus*, as well as the two Vaiāghrapadya *gṛhīs* whom Uddālaka Āruṇi leads to Aśvapati, carry (with Uddālaka himself) proofs on themselves of having had domicils in the same neighbourhood of Kuru-Pāñchāla, for the Vaiāghrapadyas, we have seen, were at any rate of Kuru habitat if they were not also of Pāñchāla. (Chhānd. Up. V 11 etc.). The Vṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad further shows that Uddālaka also frequented the learned assemblies of Janaka at Videha.<sup>72</sup>

72 From what has been said, it must be clear that I do not feel obliged to concede to Videgha Mūthava the honour of having preceded Janaka as King of Videha, not to speak of his having founded his line. *Pro abundanti cautela* again, I warn the reader against supposing that the Aśvapati to whom Uddālaka took his *gṛhīs* was ruler of far western Kekaya. He appears from the accounts to have occupied the position of a governor (*sthapati*) at least, whilst Pravāhaṇa and Chitra were ordinary noblemen of leisure and means. Ajātaśatru was apparently the King of Kāśī. Janaka, of course, was a great King of the true Eastern type.

All these were cotermporaries of each other and of Yājñavalkya, the reputed compiler of the Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā of the Yajur Veda. The three Āraṇyakas (Kauṣītakī, Vṛhadāraṇyaka and Chhāndogya) thus reflect an era which corresponded with a very active period of the "Redaction"

There is one other *rājanyabandhu*, reputed for knowledge of the Upaniṣads, mentioned in the Āraṇyakas, namely Ajātaśatru, the King of Kāśī (Vṛhad. Up. 2, 1). Kāśī, of course, is to the east of Pāñchāla. Both these circumstances fix Kāśī too as a land formerly Vrātya but already Aryanised before Ajātaśatru's time by the conversion (mass) Vrātyastoma.

My inference that the Kuru, Pāñchāla and Kāśī tracts at any rate did not entertain original Vedic Aryan *viśas*, but Vedic Aryan colonies only as permanent guests is further confirmed by the fact that the Royalty which their princely houses affected was of the typical Eastern variety. They exhibited too a marked predilection for the Royal *yajñas* for which Kṣatriya Rājanyas as such, unless they were imitating Eastern Royalty, would feel no concern.

The Yādavas of Śūraśena however were clearly quite another type of Rājanyas. They had no Sovereign King. The so-called "kings" are merely heads of clans. One of them, Kaṇsa, having married Jarāsandha's daughters, with Jarāsandha's backing, had for a season arrogated to himself the powers of an Eastern Monarch, but had failed to make good this position and paid for his ambition with his life owing to the persistent hostility of his Kṣatriya kinsmen. Jarāsandha revenged Kaṇsa's death at the hands of the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas by investing the Śūraśena capital city of Mathurā and later overrunning the whole country, in consequence of which the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas sought safety in flight to the sea-coast, where they established and so fortified the city of Dvāravatī, that from behind its ramparts even women could, according to Kṛṣṇa,

movement. The picture they present bears out the Renaissance character of that movement, and connects itself with and completes the one found outlined in Chapters 61 and 62 of the Vāyu Purāṇa, previously noticed; pp. 121-122 *supra*.

offer resistance to a besieging enemy. (Mahābhā. Sabhā 14 ; Harivaṃśa, Viṣṇu, 34—35).

It is entirely Kṛṣṇa's power of organisation, tact and diplomacy which at this critical period enabled him to hold his naturally fractious following together and with it to offer sustained resistance to the organised and powerfully supported onslaughts of this mighty monarch. Kṛṣṇa ultimately even got the better of Jarāsandha, but by what far-reaching schemes of diplomacy and guile, will be narrated later. Kṛṣṇa's was, I believe, the first and last successful experiment in pooling together and concentrating for defence and attack the scattered forces of discordant Aryan clan-units, therewith to offer resistance to a power which, in ordinary circumstances and unaided even by the allies it had impressed to its service, would have scattered these unorganised units like chaff.

On the other hand it is easy to understand Jarāsandha's pertinacity in pursuing his scheme of revenge for so long after the death of his son-in-law. He was aiming at a territorial empire which would exercise undisputed sway over the whole of Āryāvarta. According to Kṛṣṇa's own account in the Sabhāparva (Ch. 15.24), he had carried eighty-six of the hundred kings of this land captive to his capital city (after annexing, that is to say, their territories to his own). Śiśupāla and others of his following he had reduced to the position of governors and generals. All that remained for him to bring his policy to a successful issue was to break up this Vṛṣṇi-Yādava robbers' nest, for to Eastern Rājanya eyes it looked but slightly removed therefrom.

And it may be affirmed too that Kṛṣṇa himself in his heart of hearts was convinced that the Vṛṣṇi-Yādava confederacy was far indeed away from his own ideal of a civilized and civilizing community. It was not the warning  
A23.

which the fate of Kaṁsa held out before his eyes, which alone induced him to decline the crown of the Yādavas, when in the height of his power and prestige the grateful Vṛṣṇis had repeatedly offered it to him. The Yādava confederacy, he knew, was bound to be shortlived, even if it should survive his own life-time. Its salvation as a community lay in one and one direction only, that of absorption in the empire of a territorial Sovereign ruling by divine right, who commands his subjects' allegiance as due to him by such right, and administering for the benefit of them all the *Vārṇa-āśramadharma* which, so far, his people had shown but little disposition to respect or observe. He would be seen later to be shaping his policy ultimately to that end. But just now he was engaged in a death struggle from which the ramshackle clan-confederacy which looked up to him as its leader had anyhow to be saved, if it was to live and play its part in the empire to come of his dreams.

It is remarkable that in this long-drawn feud, waged with equal pertinacity between Kṛṣṇa on one side and Jarāsandha on the other, both the royal Houses of the Kurus and the Pāñchālas, and of King Virāṭa of the Matsya country, all the Eastern Kings and many even of the Western ones are seen to be ranged on the side of Jarāsandha and actually participating in the investment of the city of Mathurā under Jarāsandha's generalship. These Royal Houses, it is perfectly clear from the Harivaṁśa account (Hariv. Viṣṇu 34-35), entertained no natural sympathy for the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas: the reverse appears to have been the case; and it needed all Kṛṣṇa's diplomacy later to draw the Kuru and the Pāñchāla Houses aside and range them alongside of the Vṛṣṇis against this powerful and determined enemy of that race.

The Matsya country adjoined Śūrasēna. And yet the picture of its royalty as depicted in the Virāṭa Parva



appears rather to establish its marked Eastern affinity, though King Virāṭa is shown in it to have been reputed wealthy only on account of his herded cattle (गोधन).

A very noteworthy feature of the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas which points to their Vedic Aryan origin is, that respect for Brāhmaṇs appears amongst them to have been the exception rather than the rule. Kṛṣṇa, who from policy desired to keep on the best of terms with the power which sustained the *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma*, had in consequence to make compensation for this serious deficiency by a somewhat extravagant exhibition of his own personal loyalty to the Brāhmaṇ order, the younger members of the fraternity being frankly and actively disrespectful.<sup>73</sup> Taken all together, one must be blind indeed not to be able to notice almost immediately the diametrical contrast which the Mahābhārata and Harivaṃśa pictures of all that appertains to the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas present to everything else in the Epic, which, leaving the Vṛṣṇi-Yādava factors out of account, is seen to exhibit a fairly uniform picture of the kind of civilization which flourished in the Vṛātya lands of Māgadhic affinity and which was quite unlike what prevailed in the country of the Aryan settlements. It is this "incongruity" of the Vṛṣṇi-Yādava portraiture with the rest of the picture that makes it so historically reliable on the whole.

73 At Yudhiṣṭhira's Rājasūya, Kṛṣṇa takes upon himself the duty of washing the feet of the Brāhmaṇ guests (Sabhā 35. 10). On the other hand, the attitude of the Yādava youth towards Brāhmaṇs of the greatest eminence is typified in the trick they are said to have played upon them when Kṛṣṇa's own son Śāmba, dressed up as a woman, was presented before them and they were solemnly asked to foretell the kind of issue the woman would be delivered of. The trickery was of course detected and punished in right Brāhmaṇic style. It is not necessary to believe the story in all its absurd details for its acceptance as a true reflection of the general attitude of the Yādava youth towards the Brāhmaṇ order (Mahābhā, Maṇṣala 1. 15,22)

The saga environment being now sufficiently outlined, I begin the story at a point where Jarāsandha of Magadha is found engaged in deadly combat with the Yādava forces now fully organised by Kṛṣṇa. At this moment the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas are still fugitives from Sūrasēna and are entrenched behind the walls of their fortified sea-coast city of Dvāravatī, from behind the ramparts of which even women, as already noticed, could offer effective resistance to the enemy.

At this very juncture, however, opportunely for Kṛṣṇa's policy, a feud breaks out between two sections of the Royal House of the Kurus. But to understand how this feud came about, it will be necessary to collect a few facts from the past history of that House.

But I do not yet feel that I have finally set the stage for the play of the very human<sup>74</sup> forces which make up the Draupadī saga.

It must be taken that Brāhmanisation had already made considerable progress in the intervening country between the originally completely Vratya Magadha and the originally completely Aryanised Śūrasēna, the country which I have previously described as a kind of "no man's land" in which it would be natural for Aryan and Vratya institutions to be found juxtaposed without intimate commingling, before the Eastern Neo-Aryan wave which had developed in Atharva land as the result of the Brāhmaṇ-Rājanya concordat previously outlined had time to pass over it. But pass over it, it undoubtedly did, long before the time when the events of the saga under consideration opened.

<sup>74</sup> The attempt to represent the struggles for mastery between human rivals as a Deva-Asura war transferred from its proper venue to this earth is of course a purely Brāhmaṇ-made over-refinement.

It is clear too on the evidence that the Brāhmaṇisation which formed such an important factor of this Neo-Aryan wave had not had time at this date to work itself completely out in the institutions of this intervening territory. Kuru-Pāṇchāla in other words had not been, at the date the saga opened, as completely *varṇāśrama*ised as the Mahābhārata and the Harivaṃśa would have us believe. It is just this circumstance that makes it possible for the historically-minded to pick up tell-tale "incongruities" presented by incompatible old saga-elements which have found lodgment in the Epic in spite of the best efforts of its Brāhmaṇ authors to shut them out or at least to sublimate them beyond recognition. The slightest consideration of these "incongruities" will show how ill they fit into the highly Brāhmaṇised *varṇāśrama* matrix which the written Epic was deliberately designed to be. I cannot find any justification in the material presented for supposing that the Draupadī Saga antedated the Ātharvaṇic concordat and synthesis. That is what creates the chief difficulties in the way of isolating the original partly but not wholly Brāhmaṇised saga material. As it was already partially Brāhmaṇised, to attempt to exclude from it everything which has a Brāhmaṇic flavour as irrelevant may not unlikely result in emptying the baby itself with the bath.

To return to the story now : Vichitravīrya, King of the Kurus, died without issue. His elder brother, Bhīṣma, had long previously renounced the throne and sworn eternal celibacy to his step-mother Satyawatī, the mother of the deceased, so that the royal succession might pass through her issue and not be intercepted by Bhīṣma and his. How was the royal line to be continued ? It was not merely the Aryan necessity of substituting one war-leader for another, of which the Aryan view was that there were as good fish in the sea as out of it. In a country of

Kings who ruled by divine right, it presented quite another problem.

The Dowager Queen Satyawatī, under stress of this predicament, now makes a strong appeal to Bhīṣma himself (contrary to the oath she herself had extorted from him in his youth) to procreate issue on the widows of Vichitravīrya by the practice of *niyoga*, laying equal stress on the two motives therefor, namely, (i) the royal legitimist motive just alluded to, and (ii) the Vedic-Aryan oblation motive :

शान्तनोर्धर्मनित्यस्य कौरवस्य यशस्विनः ।

त्वयि पिण्डश्च कीर्त्तिश्च सन्तानञ्च प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

Mahābhā. Adi 103. 3.

The appeal which proved so effective in the case of Jaratkāru, the Brāhman, fails altogether to deflect this Rājanya from his troth (Mahābhā. Adi 103.24). But he justifies Satyawatī's commendation of his knowledge of all the Śrutis and the Vedāngas (verses 5-6) by suggesting that a "superior" Brāhman should be requisitioned for this service by the offer of suitable inducements, citing every possible and impossible precedent in support of the proposal. In the course of the colloquy, Satyawatī is persuaded to make a disclosure of her maiden *liaison* with the sage Parāśara and the resulting procreation of Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, (the same who has been made putatively responsible for the "Redaction" of the Vedas, the Purāṇa-Veda inclusive, and who is specially put forward in the introductory section of the Epic as the person whose seal and sign-manual were what imparted authority to the entire Noah's Ark collection of every species of legend and didactics in which the Mahābhārata in that section is made out be). This Dvaipāyana sage appears from the accounts to share with Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, also sages of great Paurāṇic

celebrity,<sup>75</sup> longevity of such phenomenal duration that we of the present century and of the Kali Yuga find ourselves entirely unable to place any credence upon it.

I personally feel constrained indeed to go much beyond. I have to cut out Vyāsa altogether from the part ascribed to him as author of the saga collection in the first place and also as the vicarious perpetuator of the race of Śantanu in the second. The original Draupadī saga, I venture to affirm, knew nothing whatever of this *deus ex machina* of the Brāhmaṇised Epic who is seen turning up in it at all convenient and inconvenient seasons and occasions.

I do not feel at all concerned about the identity of the person who was really responsible for the afore-mentioned service in the legitimist cause. What concerns me is the proneness exhibited by this remarkable Royal House to perpetuate the line by the practice of *niyoga*; as also the general rather unfavourable attitude of the Brāhmaṇs towards this practice. They disapproved of it. Bhīṣma, otherwise, would not have been made to resort to such an immense quantity of very specious argumentation to strengthen his proposal. But the condemnation expressed by that intrepid utterer of unpleasant truths, Śiśupāla, is absolutely conclusive :

भ्राता विचित्रवीर्यस्ते सतां वृत्ते व्यवस्थितः ॥

दारयोः यस्य चान्येन मिषतः प्राश्नमानिनः ।

तव जातान्यपत्यानि सज्जनाचरिते पथि ॥

Mahābhā. Sabhā 41. 23-24.

At the time of the composition of the extant Manu Samhitā, the practice of *niyoga* arouses so much hostility in

<sup>75</sup> I might add Paraśurāma to the list.



the mind of the Brāhmaṇ author that he actually goes out of his way to make Veṇa, that legendary Brāhmaṇ eyesore, as the King who was responsible for allowing it, along with the *varṇa-saṅkara* evil, to come into vogue in a world which knew nothing of them previously.

I do not think that the *niyoga* ever was a practice approved *generally* by either Aryan or Non-Aryan opinion in Indo-Aryan India, whether at the date of the occurrence of the events of the Draupadī saga or before or after. There is no proof of its ever having been any but a casual custom followed here and there. It is proved to have been a custom of the Royal House of the Kurus. The public might not have minded strange customs being followed in Royal Houses. They do not do so even to-day. But proof that they approved of it generally is distinctly wanting.

It nevertheless unfortunately is the case that any practice anywhere observed to have been followed in that country, once it was able to find lodgement in some form or other of written literature, had a tendency in times which were very different from ours to take rank as *āchāra* with a possibility of becoming even *sadāchāra*. I, for one, can never persuade myself that the complete lists of marriage and sonship forms that have found their way into the Indo-Aryan *Smṛti* literature ever represented practices all followed at one place at one time, or at different places even at the same time, not to speak of their being universally followed all over the Indo-Aryan country at any one time. The correct appraisalment of the value of these lists, to my mind, would be to regard them as museums of curious practices which were got together through the enterprise of some rather pruriently-minded collector. To regard them all as widely followed customs

which got into disfavour in course of time through a growing consciousness of their moral obliquity is to misunderstand these compilations altogether.

I feel bound and constrained to cut out the whole Satyavati-Bhīṣma colloquy and its uncomely issue as Brāhmaṇic elaboration more ingenious than artistic. A parctice which is disapproved is made to take on a sacred ritualistic character and the last trace of doubt and misgiving is caused to be removed by the Veda-Vyāsa counterfeit. Its very perfection as a counterfeit condemns it. The person selected does, for a miracle, turn out to be just the one who is able to satisfy the opposing points of view of both the Dowager and the Regent : for is not Vyāsa at the same time a very "superior" Brāhmaṇ and a "brother" too of the deceased ? I only hope that this doubly Veda-Vyāsa-sanctified counterfeit was never made to serve as a precedent in later times.

The *niyoga* system of procuring issue, I am convinced, was a by-product of the legitimistic obsession which in Indo-Aryan India does not appear to have been confined only to the royal type of mind. I am convinced also that it could never have been an approved practice amongst people who appear from very early times to have been acquainted with an equally effective and less morally oblique method of affiliation, namely, adoption.<sup>76</sup> *Niyoga* could not have been an Aryan practice ; and I can quite understand Brāhmaṇ legislators, faced by instances of this practice amongst their Non-Aryan *yajamāns*, making

<sup>76</sup> Adoption must have been known as a method of legal affiliation amongst the Aryans before their dispersal, it is such a widely followed practice amongst the Aryan races. The Conversion, *Vrātyastoma* itself had its root in the adoption motive. How can *niyoga* agree with the *Vrātyastoma* mentality?

their best efforts to confine its mischief within the narrowest limits. Departures from normal methods in legend or story or even in actual fact in high places have unfortunately always needed to be glossed over or palliated. But to treat such apologetical literary efforts as though they purported to approve or sanction the practice is an entirely mistaken proceeding.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu, without doubt, were the issue of *niyoga* practised on the wives of the deceased King but without any special preparatory confabulation of the kind outlined in the Epic. It was, let it be admitted, non-Aryan practice which had survived. The Brāhmaṇs did not approve of it, but it was such a well-known practice followed as of course when necessity arose in the Royal House of Kuru that nobody (least of all the Brāhmaṇs around the Court) could have had any occasion to reason or cogitate about it. The royal House of Kuru had not yet been completely *varnāśramised*. But the Epic was written to inculcate up-to-date Brāhmaṇised morals ; and the absurd and by no means attractive inventions noticed above were the necessary results.

But the indubitable prevalence of this Non-Aryan family custom in the Kuru Royal House furnishes occasion for other inventions scarcely less unlovely but even less justifiable morally and rationalistically.

The Epic has it that all the five sons of Pāṇḍu also (the joint husbands to be of the Draupadi of the Saga) were of *kṣetrajā* procreation. But this time the progenitors (not one only but several) are no mere relations or superior Brāhmaṇs, or both combined, but gods, real Vedic deities, and not the minor ones either, but Yama, Vāyu, Indra and the two Aśvī twins (the pair of them) ! This, coupled with the manner in which Pāṇḍu is stated to have lost his progenerative efficiency (whence arose the necessity for this

*keśetraja* procreation) and to have met his death, is such a bare-faced, disfiguring, Brāhmaṇ-flavoured hodgepodge that I see no alternative to rejecting it out of hand, not merely because these things never happened (they could not have), but as crude concoctions which never were any part of the original Saga.

I can well believe Pāṇḍu (who though younger became heir to the Royal succession according to law superseding his born-blind elder brother, Dhṛtarāṣṭra) falling so seriously, and to all appearance hopelessly, ill that he had to take leave of and retire from the toils and responsibilities of the Royal office, of his withdrawing accompanied by his still sonless wives (Prthā-Kuntī and Mādrī) into a salubrious hill-*tapovana* for health's sake ; and then recovering from these ailments sufficiently to be the actual father of as many as five lusty healthy sons. I can well believe that Dhṛtarāṣṭra meanwhile had entrenched his position as King, blind as he was, to such effect, that Pāṇḍu found himself compelled to prolong his exile until his death ; and that it was only after his brother had passed from the land of the living that Dhṛtarāṣṭra felt sufficiently safe to admit Kuntī and the five boys into his household as dependent relations only. I can well believe too that hostility was aroused against them in the minds of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his sons only after Kṛṣṇa (who was a brother's son of Kuntī, the mother of the three elder boys) had worked them up to a realisation of their rights as the lawful heirs of Pāṇḍu, and that to the point of demanding the whole of their patrimony or at least a substantial share of it from the Kauravas. I can also believe that after the quarrel had made some headway, the legitimacy of the Pāṇḍavas came to be questioned ; and truly, when you find the widow of a person, circumstanced as (when he retired) Pāṇḍu was, return home after many years' absence and present before

the world not one but five strapping lads as the issue from the loins of her invalided (and now deceased) husband, the matter is naturally made the subject of ill-natured speculation and comment by persons who have an interest in making them. Assuming that this very likely thing is what in fact happened, one can understand the reason why the authors of the Epic (whose partiality for the Pāṇḍavas and their cause is open and undisguised) should avoid all allusion to it, and at the same time *pro abundanti cautela* seek to cover up the traces by some acceptable theory of *kṣetrajā* procreation. The most natural to suggest would have been, of course, to assign the credit of actual fatherhood to some superior Ṛṣi denizen of the *tapovana* to which Pāṇḍu had retired, seeing that the Epic had made him, by way of preparing the ground, hold long confabulations with the holy men concerning ways and means for procuring children whom he could claim as his own without taking physical responsibility for the proceeding. But neither law nor propriety would sanction the vicarious procreation by even a superior Brāhmaṇ of five hefty sons in succession, each competent to do all that is required of a son. This I conceive to have been the real origin of the cock-and-bull story that figures in the Epic of gods, real gods, being made by *mantras*, derived (only those gods knew how) from a holy Brāhmaṇ again, to come down and perform this obliging service for Pāṇḍu.

On the other hand, so transparently chaste and steely austere Kuntī's deportment and demeanour throughout the course of the Epic narrative appear to be, that I for one shall be sooner prepared to believe that she, Kuntī, never existed than that Karna was the issue of her maiden amours with any creature however high-placed (let him even be the Sun-god), or that her other sons and Mādrī's twins



(whom she cherished and brought up with even greater care and motherly solicitude than she found necessary to spend on her own children) were not Pāṇḍu's sons in fact as well as in law.

For all the above reasons, I feel constrained to exclude as a purely Brāhmaṇ-made accretion the whole episode of Pāṇḍu's meeting his death in the manner stated, of the conveyance in state of his corpse to the capital and of the obsequial ceremonies on it being performed there. Of Mādrī's entering the funeral pyre of her husband, I cannot but be profoundly sceptical, seeing that not one of the widows left by the multitude who fell in the Great War is seen to have followed this excellent practice. *Their* necessity was undoubtedly greater than Mādrī's could have been. The privilege of self-immolation is no doubt accorded to the innumerable wives of Vāsudeva. But the number of Vāsudeva's wives (16,000) is such a plain Vaiṣṇavite fabrication that all extravagant statements concerning these wives again may be safely relegated to the same category. From the evidence furnished by the Epic itself, I am unable to conclude that at the date of the Saga widow-burning had come into public favour to any extent, if it all. It seems to me that the Brāhmaṇ poet, having needlessly involved Mādrī in responsibility for Pāṇḍu's death, felt constrained to provide further for her offering to atone for it by immolating herself on the burning pyre of a husband whom, I verily suspect, she had in fact predeceased. The reason for this suspicion is the great tenderness Kuntī is throughout seen lavishing on her step-sons. She must have got them all to herself when they were still very young, to be able to do so as she does. The tenderness she is seen constantly exhibiting towards them cannot be accounted for by any mere sense of duty undertaken or obligation incurred, by anything in other

words less compelling than her having acted as their *de facto* mother from their very infancy. It would be wrong to be more specific, but Mādrī's death at childbirth itself is, in the circumstances, by no means an unlikely supposition.

I meant no disparagement to Kṛṣṇa's character when I presumed that he it was who incited the Pāṇḍavas' designs upon the Royal throne of the Kurus. It would have been entirely contrary to his nature to have suffered such fine fighting material as the Pāṇḍava brothers appeared to be (relations by blood too of the great race of Vṛṣṇis) to live and die as poor relations of the rabble crew of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's numerous children. And if behind this action he had been nursing schemes of annexing the Kuru forces led by his cousins to those of the Vṛṣṇis for offering resistance to the super-powerful Jarāsandha, I cannot see that he was contemplating anything which would deserve condemnation as *un-Kṣatriya-like* or immoral from any point of view of sane and just politics. Kṛṣṇa-Mādhava, I feel entirely convinced, was not the kind of person who as a boy would, in his school, have been awarded the prize for conduct such as pedants and pedagogues approve. He would, I feel, have despised the very suggestion of it. And I should say further that the training in Upaniṣad Yoga which he is proved to have received from the Āṅgirasa Ghora (Chhāndogya Up. III 17) would truly have gone in vain had he failed to do what I am supposing he did. Sufficient reasons have, I hope, been adduced in the previous paragraphs to account for the expulsion or exile of the Pāṇḍavas with their mother from Hastināpur and the intense animosity which accompanied it. It was this animosity, provoked no doubt by their own conduct, which must have been responsible for the elaborate and very nearly successful holocaust which was prepared for them in the Jatugṛha by their resourceful cousins, with the

connivance of Dhṛtarāṣṭra himself and the cunning assistance of the Yavana engineer and artificer, Purochana. The Pāṇḍavas just managed to get away from the trap through the friendly offices of Bidūra who had scented mischief, despite the close secrecy in which the Dhārtarāṣṭras had shrouded their scheme. The childhood's quarrels between the Kauravas and the five Pāṇḍavas as recounted in the Epic bear such abundant marks of Brāhmaṇic poetical decoration that I must give up the attempt to isolate the genuine saga-stuff from it. The Jatugraha scheme and the escape therefrom into Pāñchāla of the Pāṇḍavas with their mother must, however, have been real survivals of the original Saga.

But before I pass on to the next event in point of time, I must deal with the part Drona is said to have played in the childhood life of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas and with Drona himself as he has been delineated in the Epic.

Before the Pāṇḍavas with their mother had parted from Hastināpur and directed their steps towards Pāñchāla for asylum, the Pāṇḍavas and the Kaurava youngsters had according to the Epic allowed themselves to be used by their Brāhmaṇ preceptor in the arts and sciences (chiefly in the science of war), this same Drona, as instruments for causing signal humiliation to Drupada, the King of Pāñchāla, and making the latter eat humble pie to Drona. (Drona is stated in the Epic to have been Drupada's childhood's friend and companion whom he Drupada had, in the arrogance of his mature Royal state, sent away when Drona later came to him as a suppliant for employment, as though he Drupada had never even known Drona). As the price of the peace which he was compelled to sue for from Drona, he had been made to part with the northern half of his Kingdom in favour of the Brāhmaṇ. Wonderful indeed

was this Brāhmaṇ ! Wonderful his birth ! He takes his unparalleled knowledge of the science of war as a gift from Paraśurāma himself, the famous warrior Brāhmaṇ who lives and re-lives as often and as long as Vaśiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra and Vyāsa, and must be as mythical a Paurāṇic Brāhmaṇ-made bundle of exaggerations as any of these others. Equally wonderful is the origin of the family in which he marries, and amazing beyond belief too the son he begets on his wife Kṛpī, the celebrated (and absurd) Aśvatthāmā ! By easy gradations he passes from a saint's miraculously born son to the childhood's companion of a King, a beggar who begs even into his masterly knowledge of the science by which he is to make his living and later rise to fame and even to a Kingdom, an incensed and insulted Brāhmaṇ with a grievance, a preceptor to the sons of a great Royal House, a General, a Victor, a King ! Am I wrong in affirming that he is a pure Brāhmaṇic fabrication foisted on the original Saga which knew nothing of him or his preposterous son, Aśvatthāmā ?

One fiction breeds a dozen others. The dressed-up defeat and humiliation of Drupada at the hands of his Brāhmaṇ adversary makes it a poetical necessity, on the part of the Brāhmaṇ author, to provide that Drupada in his turn should get (as a gift from Brāhmaṇs, of course) a son who will square his accounts for him with Droṇa, and a daughter destined in a parallel manner to bring death and destruction upon the House of Droṇa's Kaurava allies. But to allow these children to be begotten on the body of Drupada's chaste consort would have so unduly delayed the scheme of revenge (Droṇa was getting on in years and the Pāṇḍavas had already attained marriageable age), that the miracle-working Brāhmaṇs cause them to come out of the materials of the very *yajña* through the magic efficacy of which all this was to be accomplished. So are

born (Sūta-Māgadha fashion) Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the son, fully armed and accoutred for the act of revenge ; and Kṛṣṇā-Draupadī (she of the Saga) in the full glory of beauteous maidenhood.<sup>77</sup>

The Pāṇḍavas, it will be remembered, were Kauravas and had taken as active a part (Arjuna's, according to the Epic, was the most determinative) as their cousins in the transaction which gave occasion for the special creation of these instruments of revenge. It is none the less the report that had got about of the advent into the family of the King of Pāñchāla of this fire-brand of a girl who was to deal out death and destruction to the House of Kuru that, according to the Epic, attract them to the Kingdom of Drupada, so that (wise young fellows) they might not be forestalled by others in securing her by the same *comp* as both ally and wife ! Not one single item amongst those just detailed, I presume, could possibly have been a part of the original Saga

The plain fact appears to have been that at this period the two royal Houses of Kuru and Pāñchāla had

<sup>77</sup> Having felt compelled to obliterate Droṇa from the Saga, I do not see any reason for keeping in it this *yajña*-born son of Drupada, who is only less preposterous than Droṇa's son Aśvatthāmā. In the original Saga Drupada presumably had no issue other than Draupadī (normally born) and the hermaphrodite Śikhandī, which would be a sufficient reason in itself for Drupada making so much of Draupadī and staking everything in her cause. Polyandry being assumed to have been a custom of the House of Drupada, had this sonlessness, I wonder, anything to do with the five-husband marriage, the Pāṇḍavas at the time having still a kingdom to win by their efforts ? Was the amalgamation of the two houses of Kuru and Pāñchāla into one Royal House after the death of Drupada one of the objects the parties had in view when they came to form this extraordinary marriage alliance ? The truth about it appears to have been completely overlaid by fiction. But the five-husband marriage itself must in any case have been both a fact and an integral part of the original Saga.



been at variance without requiring a Droṇa to set them by the ears. The sympathies of the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas were divided, Duryodhana having been Baladeva's favourite and his pupil in the science of wielding the club (गदा), and Dvāravatī was many many days' journey off from Vāraṇābata. To be safe from enemies as resourceful and unscrupulous as the Kauravas had proved themselves to be, to Pāñchāla they must direct their course. The King of Pāñchāla would be sure to afford them the asylum they so sorely and immediately needed.

Before they reach their destination however, Bhīma, the one amongst the Pāṇḍavas who appears to retain ungarbled most of his original Saga traits of character, has a brief love affair with an utterly low-grade Non-Aryan woman, Hiḍimbā (poor faithful daughter of the soil), whom the Brāhmaṇ author of the Epic, in the excess of his class-prejudice, is unable to describe otherwise than as a Rākṣasī ! There never were man-eating Rākṣasas in India even in pre-historic times, any more than there were the Gandharvas and Yakṣas. Whether these belonged to the original non-Brāhmaṇ Saga and were taken over as found by the Brāhmaṇs or were figments of the Brāhmaṇ imagination imposed upon it, is impossible to say with certainty. But inasmuch as the Rākṣasas, besides affecting human flesh, are specially spoken of in the Rāmāyana as well as in the Mahābhārata as haters *par excellence* of Brāhmaṇs and enemies of *yajñas*, the presumption certainly arises that this Rākṣasa bugbear was the creation of the sacerdotal Brāhmaṇic brain. Hiḍimba, the brother of this woman, and Baka, another of the same fraternity, both of whom Bhīma sends to the other world, might have figured in some not very favourable light in the Saga, but not in any case as eaters of human flesh. Such is the Brāhmaṇ author's prejudice against the people of Hiḍimbā's tribe, whoever

they might have been (Bhīma had no such prejudice in any event, nor very keenly either had his brothers), that even the great warrior son of the union, Ghatotkacha, who lays down his life in the Pāṇḍava cause on the plains of Kurukṣetra, it is pretended, had to have his death contrived at the hands of Karna, in the manner it took place, by Kṛṣṇa himself, because forsooth Kṛṣṇa knew this Rākṣasa to be *Brāhmaṇadvēṣin*, *yajñadvēṣin* and *dharmasya loptā*, Kṛṣṇa being even made to say that had he not been thus conveniently taken out of his hands by Karna he, Kṛṣṇa, would have had to kill him with his own hands (Mahābhā. Droṇa 178-179).

I find so many and varied Brāhmaṇic fabrications to jettison from the Ādiparva that in order only to keep my Draupadī-Purāṇa within readable compass, I must pass over a great many of them without any notice whatever.

But before I pass on to the next selected topic, viz, the "Svayamvara" of Draupadī, I take the liberty of offering to the reader an absolutely sure test which will help him to perform this operation himself, though only in the very worst cases. The test is : When any part of the narrative is found to be totally lacking in verisimilitude, and is at the same time seen to imply extravagant glorification of the Brāhmaṇ, specially if this be at the expense of some other class, and, even more so if it involves the humiliation of that class, then he may have the *rechauffe* patented as sixteen annas Brāhmaṇ-made. The Droṇa-Drupada episode exhibits all these characteristics. So does in a measure the Baka episode just alluded to.

Now, what is one to make of the famous "Svayamvara" of Draupadī ?

The incontestable fact of Draupadī's marriage with all the five Pāṇḍava brothers leaves me no alternative to

cutting it out altogether as a Brāhmaṇic fabrication, however much to its credit it may be as a poetical composition.

I am by no means casting doubts upon the *svayamvara* as an institution of wide prevalence amongst Indo-Aryan Rājanyas of the East as well as of the West. Whether it was originally indigenous in the West and later passed into the East or *vice versa* may be an interesting point for inquiry. It does strike me as being far too savage a ceremony for the Upaniṣad Rājanyas of the Ātharvaṇic Vratya land, whereas in Aryan India, it would furnish just one of those occasions for the Kṣatriyas from the scattered *viśas* to meet and kill their superfluous time over disputations, bickerings, even blood-lettings, incidentally effecting exchanges of thoughts, practices, opinions and prejudices in one of the several ways which, I have supposed, had contributed to impress the civilization of the mutually independent *viś* units with a more or less uniform stamp. But truce be to all such speculations, since I am unable to persuade myself that the "Svayamvara" in question ever in fact happened.

I cannot but believe that Draupadi's marriage with the Pāṇḍavas was arranged, without advertisement (at least of the kind which is implied in a *svayamvara* ceremony) by private treaty, Kṛṣṇa-Mādhava taking a leading, and perhaps the determinative, part in the negotiations. It was a deliberately planned out political marriage. Every other consideration was subordinated to the one and only object of the marriage, namely, the alignment of the Kurus, the Pāṇchālas and the Vṛṣṇis on one side in the struggle that was being waged against Jarāsandha. The Svayamvara episode is very fine poetry and deserves for ever to live as such. But it could not have been a fact, or in the

original Saga. One has to read it in the light of what I am going to say now about the marriage itself to be convinced of the soundness of this conjecture.

What tremendous mental exercise has it not cost the Brāhmaṇ authors of the Epic to acclimatise this highly incongruous Non-Aryanish compound marriage in their chaste *varṇa-āśrama* literature and still without the hoped-for success ?

What could indeed be more puerile than to seek to account for this marriage (i) by the necessity which existed of seeing to it that even a casually dropped remark of that "living flame" of a woman ( अक्षिरिवानलस्य ), Kuntī (who imagining that her son had brought in food to eat and not a live girl to marry had advised them to divide the same up amongst themselves), was literally fulfilled ! (ii) by the apprehension which had to be eliminated that over such a prize girl the Pāṇḍavas might fall out amongst themselves in the way Sunda and Upasunda, the Daityas, did over Tilottamā in the legend ; and by a third reason adduced by the author of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa (whom these specious justifications failed to satisfy as they fail to satisfy everyone else), one again which is far too egregiously silly even for reproduction ?

The fact is that the Brāhmaṇ author of this part of the Epic found himself up against a stubborn piece of the original Saga narrative which had become traditionally so fixed and notorious that it did not admit of exclusion or erasure, against a fact (in other words) which he could neither ignore, explain away nor satisfactorily account for.

Why not then admit at once that the marriage had to be concluded in the way it was, against the wishes it might be of the Pāṇḍavas themselves, but in accordance

possibly with the dictation of Drupada and his kin, because at that time at any rate the marriage was in accordance with the custom of his House, and a group-marriage provided a better guarantee for the success of his plans ? Pāñchāla bordered on the Hills and it is not at all unlikely that the throne was at that time in the occupation of an invading dynasty whose hostility for the time being to the Kurus (with whom at other times the Pāñchālas are seen almost invariably to hang together, so far as the rest of the Indo-Aryan literature is able to testify) might well have been due to this very circumstance. All the Mahābhārata account of Drupada hesitating, demurring to, arguing and finally yeilding is, more likely than not, just faked. The only veracious part of it is the evidence it furnishes of Kṛṣṇa being all there, upon this occasion of the marriage. It is not unlikely that Kṛṣṇa on learning of the Pāṇḍavas' flight came post-haste to Drupada's Court knowing full well that, if alive, the Pāṇḍavas would be bound to seek asylum with Drupada ; and it was he who, for political reasons, brought about this unusual marriage. If there be one feature of Kṛṣṇa's character which the Mahābhārata account of his doings conclusively brings out it is his total freedom from contemporary or indeed any kind of prejudice, and his equally wonderful capacity for bearing down the prejudices of others, should these happen to stand in his way. For amorality of Napoleonic proportions in the Indian Story, one need not look beyond Kṛṣṇa. He was a "*mukta puruṣa*" indeed in that, if in no other, sense. He would be just the person to persuade the Pāṇḍavas to strike up this match even against their own sentiments. But although at the time the Mahābhārata came to be written, Kuru-Pāñchāla, according to a statement put in Karṇa's mouth, was a country where the most approved Aryan practices were observed, at the date



at any rate of the events of the Saga, it might have been and apparently was a good deal behind this stage, considering the proneness for resorting to *niyoga* found in the former principality and the five-husband marriage which admittedly took place in the latter in the teeth of all *śāstric* precedents. At that date, it is quite possible, these departures from the strict Aryan *mores* had not come to be viewed in these still Vrātya-flavoured lands with that aversion which under Brāhmaṇic schooling came in course of time to be general all over Āryāvarta.

I can easily forgive the Brāhmaṇ poet for the interpolation of the fine Svayamvara episode. To have a live heroine in hand of such superb proportions, physically and morally, and to have given her away in a marriage in the hole and corner manner I have suggested even if that was what in fact happened, would have been a serious breach of poetical propriety. And if the real fact had to be suppressed in the interest of the laws of poetry, these laws did certainly also authorise the interpolation of a properly constructed *svayamvara*. And that is all there is to be said about it in the present context.

If, as I have supposed, the marriage of the Pāṇḍavas with Draupadī was brought about through the active mediation of Kṛṣṇa-Mādhava, it was not the only political marriage this astute politician arranged to attain the end he had in view. Anticipating opposition from his own people, he later connived at the run-away match Arjuna made with his sister Subhadrā whom Arjuna takes with him to Indraprastha after his regular wedding and presents to the mistress of the house, Draupadī, garbed as a *gopālīkā*, in which apt impersonation she looks even more bewitching than in her usual habiliments of a daughter of the nobility. Whenever in the Mahābhārata I strike against anything

which speaks or smacks of Kṛṣṇa or has any visible or tangible connection with him that has a natural appearance (the tale of his 16,000 wives and all that is said about that multitude whether individually or in gross are so far removed from the natural that I reject them altogether as unreliable data for any kind of rational conclusion, positive or negative) except when it appears to be designed to give him the character of a divinity and to glorify him as such (a point to which I shall return) I seem to feel the touch of rock-bottom history. Subhadrā indeed is more thoroughly and completely saga material than even Draupadī upon whose picture, as we have seen, the Brāhmaṇ poet has not been altogether sparing in his Brāhmaṇising and artistic experimentations. But I have been anticipating matters to some extent. The Arjuna-Subhadrā marriage did not take place till after the return of the Pāṇḍavas with Draupadī, after they had concluded their marriage alliance with the King of Pāñchāla, an alliance which the Kauravas found it politic not to disregard altogether. They were persuaded to divide their patrimony as a measure of compromise with foes whom they were convinced they could not now crush. Yudhiṣṭhira with his brothers and others establish themselves at Indraprasthā, and it is here that Arjuna brings for presentation to Draupadī his Gopālikā bride, Subhadrā. But however much might all these events have caused contentment in the minds of the disinherited, they clearly did not satisfy the Kauravas. These could not also have satisfied Kṛṣṇa.

And Yudhiṣṭhira too had his weaknesses. After getting into a Kingdom at the price of so much trouble and tribulation, should he not hold a Rājasūya *yajña*? After all, he had not succeeded to Pāṇḍu's throne; that and everything appertaining to it had been retained by the Dhārtarāṣṭras.

He was really founding a new Pāṇḍava House but even so only as a cadet of the parent Kuru House. If he could only have himself consecrated and annointed as a King in the presence of all the Rājanyas within hail (the Dhārtarāṣṭras included), it might mean a definite step forward towards legitimising his sovereignty by divine and human sanction, in the eyes of the world. He cogitated over it in the true Eastern Rājanya spirit; and finally consulted Kṛṣṇa. And Kṛṣṇa's advice was just what in the circumstances might have been anticipated it would be by any one watching from outside the game of politics Kṛṣṇa was engaged in playing (and had to, for all he was worth, for sheer self-preservation).

It was futile, he pointed out, to hold a Rājasūya to which all Kings were to be invited so long as eighty-six out of the hundred they knew were lying in durance vile in Jarāsandha's capital. It is he, Jarāsandha, who will soon be celebrating his Rājasūya with these very Kings for sacrificial offerings! Who was there in the land of the Āryas to resist his might in battle? Those of the Vṛṣṇi-Yādavas even, whom he has still failed to subdue or win over to his side, are really fugitives from him to the sea-coast in far-away Dvāravatī. The Rājasūya idea was certainly the idlest of idle dreams so long as Jarāsandha stood overshadowing the Aryan world.<sup>7\*</sup>

7\* The Rājasūya of the Purāṇas is no longer merely the normal consecration ceremony which is to be observed at the coronation of every King. From the *nitya* ceremony of the Mantras and Brāhmaṇas, it has come to be regarded as an extraordinary *naimittika* royal ceremony, depriving the Aśvamedha of that character and relegating the latter to a quite secondary position. This displacement of the Aśvamedha by the Rājasūya was aided by the later Brāhmaṇa literature making the Vājapeya, with its imperial significance, a ceremony inadmissible for performance *after* the Rājasūya, and by the invention also of the

Jarāsandha, it appears, was not only subduing the other Kings, he was, contrary to prevailing Indo-Aryan political practice and understanding, annexing their kingdoms to his own, which indeed was the reason for his keeping so many Kings in his capital city as captives.<sup>79</sup> Śiśupāla and the other so-called allies of his appear from the accounts to have been his satraps or generals or other similar mandatories rather than feudal vassals or tributaries. The hatred and fear inspired by this unprecedented policy of annexation, pursued as it moreover appears to have been with ruthless determination for years on end, would naturally give currency to stories (unquestionably false) of his cruel disposition, of the plans which

Mahābhiṣeka ceremony, the connection of which with the Rājasūya I have commented on in another note (Note 29, p 63 *supra*). All this went hand in hand with the progress of imperialistic ideas which the parcelling out of the land into too many warring principalities was in itself bound to foster in all thoughtful minds (cf. Italy in Dante and Da Vinci's times). In Paurāṇic times, it is clearly a ceremony to be performed by a King who aspires to be regarded by his fellow-Kings as Rāja-chakravartin. Its performance, then, naturally rouses jealousies and rivalries, as Yudhiṣṭhira found to his cost. Rāma of Kośala, the hero of the Rāmāyaṇa, actually desisted from performing it, and performed the Aśvamedha instead, being counselled in that sense by the sage Bharata. Thus an ordinary Royal coronation ceremony came in course of time to be transformed into an imperial one. The Vāyu-Purāṇa would even have it that Pṛthu himself was consecrated at his Rājasūya by नरोत्तमैः (Kings), Ch. 70. 21. (The verse occurs rather casually, and does not really fit into the context in which it is found). See in this connection Eggeling, Śatap. Br. Part III, S. B. E. XLI, pp. xxiv etc.

<sup>79</sup> The Niti-śāstra rules counselled the conqueror to reduce the conquered to vassalage. But Jarāsandha was by policy an annexationist. What could he do with the Kings whose territories he had annexed but keep them interned in his capital. The rumour that Jarāsandha kept them for purposes of sacrifice (a rumour which even Kṛṣṇa believed in) must have been false, for Jarāsandha is described elsewhere as in every other respect a virtuous *āchāra-abiding* King.

he had matured of offering his prisoners as victims at a great thanksgiving sacrifice to be held for victories won, and other like canards which made him pass into oral tradition for a veritable ogre, an impression which is entirely contradicted by even a superficial examination of what written records we find of him in the Purāṇas.

However that might be, the end of it all was an adventure of daring combined with guile in which Kṛṣṇa himself and two of the Pāṇḍavas are shown as taking part; and by it they are able to compass Jarāsandha's death in the heart of his capital city of Giribraja itself, without resort to armed force which Kṛṣṇa had already admitted would be of no avail against him. By this act is removed from Kṛṣṇa's field of operation the only equal adversary who was there to oppose and possibly frustrate his political aims. It is Jarāsandha's chivalry, coupled with Kṛṣṇa's disregard of it, which enables this unexpected result to be so easily achieved. The account we read in the Epics of the concluding acts of his life so far from making Jarāsandha out as an ogre or monster presents him in the most favourable light. The description of the entry of the three adventurers into Giribraja is fraught with local colouring and otherwise possesses verisimilitude in a marked degree. Giribraja is a "city of *chaityas*" and "the flourishing abode of a contented populace of all the four *varṇas*". The whole ensemble points to a more advanced state of civilization and culture than was to be found in the lands which the three adventurers had left behind them. I have cited Kṛṣṇa's description of the country of Magadha in another context and need not repeat it here. There is in all these descriptions of Jarāsandha and his country just that suggestion of envious regard which shows that the superiority of this land in



point of civilization and culture over the rest of Northern India and the superior capacity for governance of its Kings were not open to question. These descriptions point unmistakeably, in prospect, to the Magadha of Chandragupta Maurya of future days, which in itself I take to be corroborative of the historicity of the Jarāsandha of the Mahābhārata and Harivaṃśa story. Chandragupta, it is clear, did not have to take lessons in imperial governance from any Persianised Hellenistic King. Indo-Aryan Imperialism belonged to the soil of Magadha, was indigenous to it, and is racy of it in every account left in contemporary literature.

The *coup* having succeed beyond expectation, the captive kings were immediately liberated. The Rājāsūya ceremony was held, much to the chagrin and inwardly-felt humiliation on the part of Duryodhana and his party, whilst Śiśupāla by his outspokenness and mad hatred for Kṛṣṇa (it seems both he and Kṛṣṇa were affecting the state and the equipments of "Vāsudeva", an *avatāra* whose advent about this time had been both predicted and believed in) queered the ceremony itself for Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers. In the result it ended by creating considerable jealousy and ill-feeling towards the Pāṇḍava-Kṛṣṇa alliance, and the Kauravas took full advantage of it to undermine the prestige and power of the Pāṇḍavas and to consolidate their own position. Still it would have been necessary for them to have abided for a time before taking decisive action, if only Yudhiṣṭhira had not allowed himself to be lured into a trap and caught within its meshes, with wife, brothers and everything he held and possessed, a situation which any but a confirmed gambler like himself could have easily foreseen and avoided. But it is to this vice and folly of his, again, that we owe one of the finest dramatic situations that could be conceived in the brains

of a poet. I cannot resist the conclusion that this situation happened in fact, and the poet did not have to dream inspired dreams for its conception. The whole description of the truly great "Vastraharaṇa" episode as recounted in the Mahābhārata (with one important qualification to be specified) must be made up substantially of genuine saga material in any event (whether true in every particular to fact or not), poetic embellishments and all.

The Pāṇḍavas are ceremonially invited to Hastināpur where Yudhiṣṭhira is challenged and inveigled into playing a game of dice with the disreputable reprobate and toady, Saubala Śakuni, at which game, he successively stakes his possessions, his brothers, himself and finally his wife, and loses on every single throw of the dice ! The younger Pāṇḍavas grind their palms and gnash their teeth in impotent fury, whilst the basest of the Dhārtarāṣṭras give themselves up to indecent jubilation !

Into the seraglio is now sent Duryōdhana's emissary and he communicates to Draupadī the fateful issue of the game as well as the command to her, of her and her husbands' new masters, to come to the Assembly Hall and await her new Lords' pleasures *there*.

The dark-featured maiden with blue-black locks, who even as a bride had the mein and deportment of a goddess born, is now a queen-regnant. But the news is so appallingly trivial, albeit tragic, that for one brief moment she does not believe her ears. Collecting herself immediately however she demands to know who it was that was staked first, herself or her Lord, the King. "Go back and find this out *from the gamester* !" But Duryōdhana is too impatient for parleys and has her dragged by the hair, in circumstances of unspeakable ignominy and shame, before the seated senators by that vilest of the Dhārtarāṣṭras, Dus-śasana. Angry but undismayed, a lioness at bay,

she faces them about, and demands of them the law. She adjures the senators to declare what *dominium* Yudhiṣṭhira had over her, after he had staked himself and lost ?

Whilst the oldest senators, aghast at the indecency of the whole proceeding, sat dumb-founded before the riddle which confronted them, up rose Vikarna, a *preux chevalier*<sup>80</sup> if ever there was one, for all that he was a Dhārtarāṣṭra. Deriding the Elders with their inexplicable reticence over a question which he should have thought presented no difficulty, he proclaimed his clear and unhesitating personal conviction (in which truly he was some thousands of years in advance of his times) that Yudhiṣṭhira drunk as he was with the lust of gambling could by no means be regarded a free agent. Besides, how could he alone stake Draupadī when his brothers could clearly claim *condominium* with him, and that too when he no longer was lord and master of himself ? The Princess *sans peur et sans reproche* (अनिन्दिता) was in his opinion free, as free, that is to say, as when the game began, and must be allowed to go free !

A straight and powerful speech which rings true even to this day, the effect of which Duryodhana by cruelly conceived astuteness sought however to turn by beseeching the Princess to refer her difficulties to Yudhiṣṭhira's own self, "that paragon of virtue who had never been known to deviate from *dharma* !"

Meanwhile sense has begun stirring in the depths of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's slow-moving brain. Rebuking his eldest son

<sup>80</sup> प्राज्ञसम्मतः is all that his mother Gāndhārī is able, in her supreme sorrow, to say of him when she is led to view the remains of her dead sons and others in the abandoned battlefield. So he is, even to this day.

for his infamous proceedings, in that he had thereby heaped (as Draupadī had pointed out) indignity not only on herself and the Pāṇḍavas but had irretrievably besmirched the honour and prestige of the Royal House of the Kurus, "Child !" he says, "foremost and best of all the brides of my House ! take thou from me whatever boon thou desirest, for there be none that I can deny thee". "If so be thy will my Lord", quickly responds the Princess, "then, grant thou Yudhiṣṭhira his freedom ; for hard it will be for his son to be known to the world as *dāsa-putra*". "So be it", rejoins Dhṛtarāṣṭra, but glad shall I be to give thee still another boon ; do thou but ask for it, foremost and best of all the brides of my House !" "Then grant, Lord, freedom to the brothers of Yudhiṣṭhira." A third boon, offered in the same manner, is declined with such supreme dignity and grace that unwilling admiration is extorted from even the lips of her most foully scurrilous and malevolent enemy, Karna.

"Never before in legend or story of fair women of yore", Karna declared, "had been heard the like of what we have seen achieved by Kṛṣṇā to-day ! Truly has she proved herself the vessel whereby the Pāṇḍavas have gotten over the most perilous of floods that has ever confronted the paths of men !"

A true estimate and just ! From out of the profoundest depths of anguish and of shame, she rises through the might of her personality alone, triumphant, exalted and resplendent !

It is remarkable how the appreciation of that personality initiated by lips the most chivalrous, passes on to and swells on lips that were less complaisant, breaking forth finally in a paean of superlative praise upon lips which were the most venomous ! This, the contagion of virtue, progressively spreading and finally sweeping off

his feet even the most vicious, was the real miracle, not the indefinitely-stretching out and never-to-be-ending single piece of cloth (the *eka-bastra* which was all the drapery Draupadī wore), a myth for which not Kṛṣṇa but the Brāhmaṇ-Vaiṣṇava poet is to be held (reprehensibly)<sup>81</sup> responsible.

The ascendancy which Draupadī won in the Assembly Hall on that memorable day she retained unabated all her life.

But, for the present, the Pāṇḍavas' sun has set, and they retire into long-drawn exile to atone for Yudhiṣṭhira's folly. Kṛṣṇa's diplomacy suffers corresponding eclipse. Duryodhana no longer bides his time, but makes full use of his opportunities to consolidate his position by good government within and by generous dealings with allies and friends without.

I pass on at once to the Virāṭa Parva. For rapidity of movement and sustained dramatic interest, no Parva can compare with the Virāṭa Parva. But all this gain in poetic quality is at the expense of historicity, if that is what one has been looking for.<sup>82</sup> But beyond the coruscating poetry one does nevertheless get the feel of fact and not only of saga material. The *Ajñāta-vāsa* is not wholly poetical myth, though how much of it is fact and how much pure poetry, it may be difficult to determine.

<sup>81</sup> I mean, in an artistic sense. Striking right against it, where it occurs, is a miserable experience to most readers, as I have been assured by many. But, of course, *all* readers have not the same tastes.

<sup>82</sup> I have much the same complaint to make against the Virāṭa Parva as certain fox-hunting members of the English gentry are said to have had against the "stinking violets" which threw their dogs off the "scent" of the quarry! The Parva is much too over-laid altogether with poetry to serve the purposes of the history-hunter.



Inconsequential King Virāṭa, the timid stripling prince Uttara, poor-spirited Queen Sudeṣṇā, Abhimanyu's girl-bride Uttarā, must have all figured in the original Saga, and in it drawn presumably from life, so real and human they all appear to be. The Pāṇḍavas of course were playing parts, none playing to such perfection as did Yudhiṣṭhira in his personation of Kaṅka Vaiyāghrapadya. But the dominating personality round which nevertheless turns this contracted little wonder-world of the King of the Matsyas (the very *senāpati* of which, Kichaka, a brother of the Queen and by caste a Sūta, is a half-witted mountebank) is still the Queen who (as Sairindhri) elects to play the part of a lady-in-waiting to a Queen !

In the Udyoga Parva, even Bhīmasena for once is found talking of peace and compromise. If the horrible oath to drink Dus-śāsana's blood and the drinking of it did really form parts of the original Saga (they are in the Mahābhārata), this talk of compromise must indeed be a very bad misfit. But a Saga has the right to be inconsistent. I think on the whole however that this talk is Brāhmaṇ didactics, misplaced in the mouth of Bhīma. Bhīmasena, if he did drink Dus-śāsana's blood, thereby proved himself more of a cannibal than the Brāhmaṇ authors of the Mahābhārata have succeeded in proving Bhīma's lowgrade relations by marriage (or cohabitation), Hidimbā and Hidimba, to have been. *Per contra* the two women, Prṥthā (Kuntī) and Draupadī prove true to themselves, alert and unflinching as ever, shattering by their timely intervention the fine-spun skeins of diplomacy and guile which were being woven whilst every preparation was on foot for coming to death-grips. I cannot however persuade myself that the Venī-saṃhāra episode was any part of the original Saga. Draupadī, for all the grandeur of her personality, is no Kriemhild by temperament or training.

But if this too is shown to have been a part of the original Saga I would not quarrel with it. The *Veṇī-saṃhāra* oath like the blood-drinking one has a distinctly saga-ic flavour.

Came the long-drawn carnage on the plains of Kurukṣetra wherein the victory finally won by the Pāṇḍavas proves even less grateful than defeat would have been, followed on its wake by the self-exterminating internecine feud which broke up and literally destroyed the Yādava confederacy, before Kṛṣṇa's own eyes, in grief for which he ended a life of unexampled faith in the efficacy of Work directed and controlled by Intellect (*Karma* with *Jñāna*) in disillusionment as profound as was that of the Pāṇḍavas after victory.

The consequence to Indo-Aryan chivalry of the complete denudation of its fighting force which followed upon these self-exterminating fraternal feuds was seen in the deplorable capture upon the highway of the women-folk of Kṛṣṇa's household whom Arjuna was escorting to Hastināpur, by Ābhīra brigands.

One of the main objects of Kṛṣṇa's diplomacy was, as I have previously hinted, to mitigate and overcome the feudal arrogance and aversion to discipline of the fractious Yādava clans under the steady influence of *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma* to be administered within the Imperial Peace of a *Rāja-chakravartin* throned at Hastināpur, and he had consistently directed his efforts within the confederacy to weaning his tribe to it, in what he conceived to be in their own best interests (having to that end steadily refused the crown of the Yādavas) at the same time that it would realise his great dream of a single Indo-Aryan Empire ruled by the same *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma* and enforced by the authority and moral prestige of a Sovereign who ruled even himself by its precepts,

Kṛṣṇa's grandiose scheme of a single *varṇa-āśrama*

Empire centred at Hastināpur failed of realisation. But the ultimate purpose of that scheme succeeded perhaps only too well and mainly as the result of his work. Not vainly did he, a Kṣatriya, come to be regarded in later ages by Indo-Aryans in general as an Avatāra of God, and to be ranked as the greatest of the Avatāras by Brāhmaṇ propagandists of the Sree-Kṛṣṇa cult more than by any Kṣatriya. His work and personality must have left a profound impress upon the thoughts, imaginations and emotions of his contemporaries, so that his deification (in the necessarily degenerate and lifeless era that followed his death) did not probably meet with serious opposition and did not also presumably take a very long time in maturing ; and it was this deification following on his death which finally achieved what he had failed to bring about in his life-time, namely, the spreading and deep-rooting of the *varṇa-āśrama* idea all over Indo-Aryan land,<sup>83</sup> and that too in the absence of that political unity which Kṛṣṇa had vainly striven to establish as a necessary means to that end. The political union of Indo-Aryan India under a single ruler became a fact for the first time in the reign of Dharmāśoka, a successor of the very Jarāsandha whose annexationist policy proved so highly repugnant to contemporaneous Indo-Aryan political practice (Kṛṣṇa's own amongst others') that he had to be weeded out as a

<sup>83</sup> In the Vāyu Purāṇa litany devoted to recounting the greatness of Viṣṇu in this his Sree-Kṛṣṇa Avatāra occurs this passage which exactly represents what Kṛṣṇa stood for in the eyes of his contemporaries and successors, धर्म in its meaning, of course, "positive law" :

यो गतिर्धर्मयुक्तानामगतिः पापकर्मणाम् ।

चातुर्वर्ग्यस्य प्रभवश्चातुर्वर्ग्यस्य रक्षिता ॥

चातुर्वर्ग्यस्य यो वेत्ता चतुराश्रम्यसंश्रयः ।

Vāyu Pur. 97. 86-87

Also Harivaṃśa I 40. 38-39

general pest. It was just here however that Jarāsandha saw further than even Kṛṣṇa ; for Jarāsandha discerned what Kṛṣṇa failed to see that feudal vassalage did not make for an Empire-state, which is what Kṛṣṇa too had been aiming at. But the Empire which Kṛṣṇa was striving to establish was an Empire which would be ruled by *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma* and not by the despotic will of an autocrat like Veṇa.

Kṛṣṇa's dream of an Indo-Aryan Empire ruled by law was realised still more paradoxically by a Buddhistic King, a circumstance which led to a temporary overshadowing of the very *Varṇa-āśrama-dharma* for which Kṛṣṇa had lived and died by its most serious rival, the Buddhistic religion and scheme of life. That scheme however was less removed from the *varṇa-āśrama* ideal than it is generally believed to be, specially by people who have accustomed themselves to viewing Indo-Aryan historical developments in the light of analogies derived from European history.

With Kṛṣṇa dead, I feel I have very nearly arrived at the end of my journey. The remaining fragments of the Saga are soon picked up.

Much of the detailed description of the Kurukṣetra battles is such that it could have been written only by persons who never saw what a battle was like. But genuine saga deposits are discernible here and there, and of this description is the Abhimanyu episode, the pitiless doing to death of this lion's cub who does not seem to know what fear of death is even when death is hugging him closely around from all directions ; and the relentless pursuit by father and uncle, infuriated now to madness, of that one amongst the adversaries who was held chiefly responsible for foully crushing out of existence this still youthful but stark impersonation of indomitable Kṣatriya battle-lust.

The Geetā episode obviously could be nowhere in the Saga. Incomparably the most amazing *tour de force* in the field of literary composition, it was composed, of course, not in the heat of the battle-field, but in cold blood, in the *sanctum* of a great Vedāntist who has chosen to remain nameless, and so highly successful has been this incredible essay in self-effacement that not only has the authorship remained unknown, but the work itself has been made historically unplaceable. The Śānti and Anuśāsan Parvas are by the same token entirely outside the Saga. They are, it needs hardly to be stated, out and out Brāhmaṇ-made didactics. The Āśvamedha, Āśramabāsika and Mouśala Parvas contain much that has the genuine saga ring.

In connection with the last-mentioned Parva, which brings us to the end of Kṛṣṇa's (by all tests) great and eventful life-history, I desire to make one final observation.

If only the passages which are expressly directed to affirming the incarnation of the Supreme Being in Kṛṣṇa and his identity with the Ruler of the Universe be rigorously excluded, the statements in the Mahābhārata, wherever they occur, concerning Kṛṣṇa himself, his kith and kin (barring his wives) appear to me (after making due allowances for poetical license and poetical exaggerations) to be on the whole those which have least suffered from Brāhmaṇical manipulation. They must be derived from genuine Paurāṇic tradition which later was to undergo such deliberate and systematic perversion for devotional purposes, in the Harivaṃśa to some extent, but chiefly in the Viṣṇu and the Bhāgavata Purāṇas.<sup>24</sup> The real Kṛṣṇa

<sup>24</sup> Whether the tale of Kṛṣṇa's 16,000 wives is to be regarded as a religious or poetical exaggeration, I shall not undertake to say. That



of the Mahābhārata appears to me to be extremely human, superhuman only in his political aims and purposes and in his singular freedom from contemporary or indeed from any kind of prejudices, one truly *mukta* (as I have said before) but only in a Napoleonically amoral way. For substantial confirmation of what I say, one has only to go over Duryodhana's catalogue of charges against him and the reaction it had on him as set out in the 61st Canto of the Śalya Parva. So far indeed was Kṛṣṇa in advance of his times that it would have been impossible for a mere poet of the age when the Mahābhārata came to be written to have drawn him from imagination alone. The model must have been furnished by life and the picture carried over by tradition till it got itself impressed in written literature. Even if I had doubts about the reality of Kṛṣṇā-Draupadī, I can have none whatever of the reality of Kṛṣṇa-Mādhava.

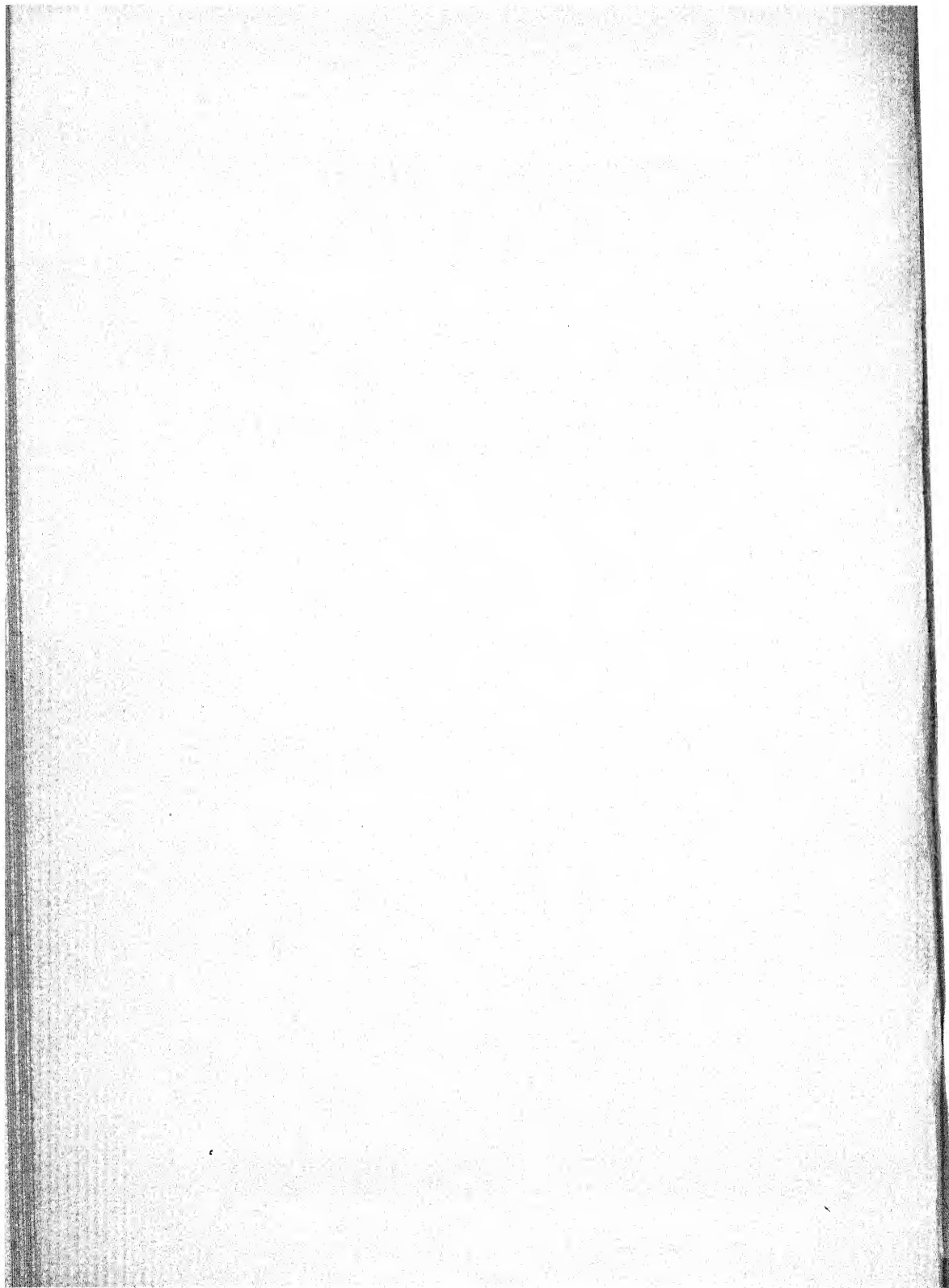
The two concluding Parvas, the Mahāprasthānika and Swargārohaṇika are too fine and sophisticated to have in any measure formed the stuff of a Sūta-made Saga. They must also be put out of it.

To sum up, Draupadī in my judgment was, for all the fiction in which her birth remains enshrouded, a real person, and drawn also in the main from genuine Paurāṇic material. In brilliance, force of character and personality, she was seen to transcend and excel the other characters in the drama as far as the Sun may be said to transcend and excel the dependent planets and comets. But Kṛṣṇa, the single exception to this rule, appeared to be even more massive, forceful and brilliant than herself. The

it takes unmeasured "license" with facts is beyond question. Everything bearing on his wives has to be as ruthlessly rejected as everything else which bears on his divinity.

Mahābhārata world was indeed dominated by a Double-Star, Kṛṣṇa-Kṛṣṇā. The similarity in names was just a coincidence. But there appears to be something singularly appropriate in the relation in which the Mahābhārata makes them stand to each other, that of *sakhā* and *sakhī*, friends and equals.

I have designated this Saga "The Draupadī Saga." With equal propriety it might have been styled "The Saga of Kṛṣṇa-Mādhava and Kṛṣṇā-Draupadī". Jarāsandha was too soon removed from the scene to enable us even to conjecture what possibly might have been his place in that wonderful world in the epoch-making years that followed on his death.



## Appendix B.

### Texts and Comments.

Readers of the Book, to many of whom the original sources may not be readily accessible, will find the following selection of texts useful for reference. I have added some notes which for one reason or another could not be conveniently incorporated in the Book or the foot-notes.

§ I. Distinguishing marks of the members of the *Vr̥ṣayagaṇa*, as found in the texts of the *Br̥hmaṇa Books* (*Pañchaviṃśa* and *Jaiminīya Br̥hmaṇas*).

(a) PB XVII 1.2 :

हीना वा एते हीयन्ते ये व्रात्यं ( व्रत्यां ) प्रवसन्ति न हि ब्रह्मचर्य्यश्चरन्ति  
नकृषिन्नवणिज्याम् ।

PB XVII 1.9 :

गरगिरो वा एते ये ब्रह्माद्यञ्जन्यमन्नमदन्त्यदुस्तवाक्यन्दुस्तमाहुर-  
दण्ड्यन्दण्डेण व्रन्तश्चरन्त्यदीक्षिता दीक्षितवाचं वदन्ति ।

I have for reasons stated in the Book (p. 12) favoured the reading चरन्तः दीक्षिताः in place of चरन्त्यदीक्षिताः (which is the reading in the *Bibliotheca Indica* print) as being more consistent with the other related texts. The passage ये ब्रह्माद्यञ्जन्यमन्नमदन्ति is so obviously at variance with गरगिरः which immediately precedes it, that I cannot but suppose that this passage too may have got mutilated. If, instead, it had read ये ( न ) ब्रह्माद्यञ्जन्यमन्नमदन्ति or ये ब्रह्माद्यञ्जन्यन्नान्नमदन्ति, the sense of the reading would have agreed perfectly with

गरगिरः, and would indeed have been explanatory of it, for it is hardly to be supposed that the Vrātyas were literally understood to have been in the habit of only eating poison or whatever else was considered unfit for consumption by Aryans. On the other hand, it would be quite natural on the part of a commentator of Sāyana's times to seek to make the texts fit with ideas which through the Purāṇas had come to be associated with Rākṣasas. This could be so easily arranged by dropping the negative from the passage in question as I have supposed it to have been done, and adding it before दीक्षितः and further altering चरन्तः into चरन्ति (Rāvaṇa and other Rākṣasas are made to speak Sanskrit in the Rāmāyaṇa), that it is difficult not to suspect that this is exactly what happened. Sāyana's reading of the texts is taken by him as indicative of the Vrātyas having been people who विपरीताचारानाचरन्ति। The term विपरीताचारान् has to be understood in the highly sophisticated Paurāṇic sense above indicated to accord with that reading. My reading, on the other hand, would describe the Vrātya as he was in life, and without any Rākṣasic implication, just the way in fact he would have impressed his far less sophisticated Aryan contemporaries. The text as I read it would further mean that the Vrātya *after* conversion would both eat ब्रह्माद्यञ्जन्यमन्नम् and speak दीक्षितवाचं, as was to be naturally expected, though he would equally naturally complain that the दीक्षितवाचः (the words of *mantras*) were rather hard to pronounce in the way demanded. My reading finally agrees entirely with the related texts of the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa and of the Baudhāyana Śr. Sūtra.

PB XVII 1.14 :

उष्णीषञ्च प्रतोदश्च ज्याहूरोदश्च विषथश्च फलकास्तीर्णः कृष्णशंवासः  
कृष्णवलक्षे अजिने रजतो निष्कस्तद् गृह्यते ।



PB XVII 1.15 :

वलृकान्तानि दामतृपाणीतरेपां द्वे द्वे दामनी द्वे द्वे उपानहौ द्विषं  
हिल्यान्यजिनानि ।

PB XVII 1.16 :

एतद् वै ब्रात्यधनं यस्मा एतद्ददति तस्मिन्नेव मृजाना यन्ति ।

PB XVII 1.17 :

त्रयस्त्रिंशता एयस्त्रिंशता गृहपतिमभिसमायन्ति..... ।

PB XVII 2.1 :

अथैष षट् षोडशी ये नृशंसा निन्दिताः सन्तो ब्रात्यां प्रवसेयुस्त  
एतेन यजेरन् ।

PB XVII 2.2 :

अभिपूर्व्वेण वा एते पाप्मना गृहीता ये नृशंसा निन्दिताः सन्तो  
ब्रात्यां प्रवसन्ति यत् षट् षोडशानि स्तोत्राणि भवन्ति तेन पाप्मनो ऽधि  
निर्मुच्यन्ते ।

PB XVII 3.1 :

अथैष द्वि षोडशी ये कनिष्ठाः सन्तो ब्रात्यां प्रवसेयुस्त एतेन  
यजेरन् ।

PB XVII 3.2 :

हीना वा एते हीयन्ते.....ये कनिष्ठाः सन्तो ब्रात्यां प्रवसन्ति ।

PB XVII 4.1 :

अथैष शमनीचामेद्वाणां स्तोमो ये ज्येष्ठाः सन्तो ब्रात्यां प्रवसेयुस्त  
एतेन यजेरन्

With reference to the ज्याहोडः in text 14, Dr. Caland justly remarks that the meaning of the term was unknown even to the Sūtra-kāras and their authorities. This remark is as well applicable to the *vipathā* ; and I have preferred to use the Sūtra-kāras' treatment of this latter "equipment"

of the Vrātya (to illustrate this very point as well as for other reasons) in my Book (see “*vipatha*” in the General Index for page-references). I therefore exhaustively reproduce in this Appendix the texts only on the *vipatha*, paying no special attention of that kind to the other equipments. The texts of the Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra have lent themselves for reproduction in full by reason of their brevity. These and the PB. texts extracted will serve to give the reader a fair idea of the kind of gentry for whose admission into the Aryan communion the Conversion Vrātyastoma was originally designed.

(b) JB II 222 :

दिव्या वै ब्रात्या ब्रात्यामधावयन् वुधेन स्थपतिना.....मुह्यन्तीव एते  
ये ब्रात्याम् धावयन्ति.....ये ब्रात्याम् धावयन्ति वाचा हि अमेध्यमव्रतं  
व्रदन्ति । तेषाम् इन्द्रियम् वीर्यम् वाचोऽपक्रामति ।

These texts like the Baudhāyana texts to be extracted in the next Section are entirely in accord with my reading of PB XVII 1.9, as I have already remarked (p. 12 n).

Note too that Budha is spoken of here as having been *sthapati* of the दिव्याः (दैवाः in PB, दैव्याः in Baudhā Śr. S.) ब्रात्याः before even he found occasion to officiate for them at the *stoma*.

[Dr. Caland's reasons for dating the JB before the PB do not commend themselves to me. But as the question does not arise for consideration in relation to any part of my thesis, I reserve that point for the present.]

## § 2. Vrātyastoma Sūtra texts.

### (a) The Baudhāyana Vrātyastoma Texts.

Baudhā. Śr. S. XVIII 24 :

ब्रात्यस्तोमेन यक्षमाणो भवति ते राजनि वा ब्राह्मणे वा प्रतिग्रहमिच्छन्ते  
मासाय वर्त्तवे वा ते यमभिसंजानन्ते (?) तं स्थपतिं कुर्वन्ति स एषां

व्रतानि चरति.....यत् कृष्णवासः कृष्णतूपं परिधत्ते दीक्षितवसनस्य तद्रूपमथ  
 .....यत् कृष्णमुष्णीषं धारयति दीक्षितोष्णीपस्य तद्रूपमथ यच्चर्ममयैर्वाण  
 वह्निस्तिस्मृधन्वं धारयति दीक्षितदण्डस्य तद्रूपमथ यद्वात्यवादं वदति दीक्षित-  
 वादस्य तद्रूपमथ.....प्रतोददण्ड एव यूपः.....रथोपस्थो गार्हपत्यः.....  
 यदाहरति सा याज्या यदश्नन्ति स वपट्कारो.....यदभिक्रोशन्ति स  
 उद्गीथस्ते य एवमेतं यज्ञक्रतुं परोक्षमुपेत्य प्रत्यक्षं नोपेयुः ।

Baudhā. Śr. S. XVIII 25 :

यथा दीक्षितावकीर्णा विच्छिन्नसोमपीथा अनाश्यान्ना एवं स्युः.....  
 तेषां ये ऽनाहिताग्नयस्ते यथागृहं विपरेत्याग्नीनाधाय त्रयस्त्रिंशता त्रयस्त्रिंशता  
 दक्षिणाभि स्थपतिमुपसमायन्ति तेषां ब्रह्मवन्धुरमागधो मागधवाक्यो ब्रह्म-  
 वन्धुरपुंश्चलू पुंश्चलूवाक्या जरत्कद्रथो.....वा.....तदेतद्वात्यधनं समवशान्तं  
 दण्डोपानहं शामूलजिनं रथे तिष्ठन्सुब्रह्मण्यः सुब्रह्मन्यामाह्वयति दक्षिणानां  
 काल एतदेवास्य भवत्यृत्विजो दक्षिणा विभजन्ते ।

Not only, as has been pointed out in the Book (p. 89), would this Sūtra preposterously foist on the fallen Aryan reprobate the Māgadha or Puṁśchalū *brahmabandhu* (though a personation only of this creature might be made to serve if the genuine article should, as in most cases they were bound to, prove unavailable), the *vipatha* also is made to appear at the ceremony, but "personified" into the "owner of a worn-out car" (जरत्कद्रथः). Like the provision allowing the *brahmabandhu* Māgadha or Puṁśchalū to be personated by a fake, this one too showed consideration on the part of its designers. Since only by a rare coincidence would the Aryan reprobate be found also to be the owner of a car, and both car and owner had therefore to be hired for each occasion, it was just as well that the car should be a worn-out one. And all this

complicated subterfuge had to be adopted because the Māgadha, the Pūṃśchalū and the car happened to be mentioned in close association in Paryāya 2 of the Vrātya Book of the AV as the appurtenances of the Eka-Vrātya ; and room therefore had to be found for *all* of them in the ritual scheme : the temptation to bring rituals to agree with the texts of a Veda was, to a writer of a Brāhmaṇa, really irresistible ! The glosses inserted in between, in the Baudhāyana texts in question, do not improve matters at all. I have omitted these glosses because I am more interested in Baudhāyana the witness than in Baudhāyana the glossator. The glosses, the reader may examine and appraise for himself, in Dr. Caland's edition of the Sūtra Work.

For these perversions of the *Vrātyastoma* rituals, the reader must not understand, from the language that I have been led to use here and in the Book, that I have been laying the responsibility upon the Sūtra-writer himself or indeed on any particular individual. These scholastic refinements must have been evolved in some School or Schools, and the Baudhāyana writer must unquestionably have been recording traditions which had crystallized into these shapes in some School. As a witness of these and other happenings (natural as well as preposterous) I have found this Sutra-kāra's evidence quite invaluable. My sense of the high *historical* value of almost everything he has written and registered upon this subject of the *Vrātyastomas*, I have already recorded in the Book (see p. 93).

Baudhā. Śr. S. XVIII 26 :

स एष ज्येष्ठानामग्निष्टोम.....एष एव कनीयसाम्.....तेन हैतेन मरुत  
ईजिरे तेषां विष्णु स्थपथिरासाथो हैतेन दैव्या ब्रात्या ईजिरे तेषां बुधः

सौम्य स्थपतिरासाथो हैतेन कुर्वह्मणां पुत्रा ईजिरे तेषामौपदिति गौपालयनो  
 वैयाघ्रपद्य स्थपतिरास तेन हेष्ट्वा पञ्चालान्त्रात्या अभिप्रययु स्तान्ह पितर  
 उचुर्मा पुत्रका पञ्चालान्यासिष्टोपवादिनो वै पञ्चाला उप वो वदिष्यन्तीति ।  
 तान्हानादृत्त्यैव प्रययुस्तेह केशिनो दाल्भस्योपवसथमाजग्मुस्तान्ह श्वोभूते  
 वहिष्पवमानं सर्पतो अन्वालेभिरे पवित्रं वै वहिष्पवमान आत्मानं पवयिष्यामह ]  
 इति वदन्तो अथह पञ्चालेषु गन्धर्वायणो वालेय आग्निवेश्यो अनूचान  
 आस तान्ह सह सर्पतः पप्रच्छ के सर्पन्तीति वयं मरुत इति तेषां वः क  
 स्थपति रित्यहं विष्णुरित्यौपदिति गौपालयनो वैयाघ्रपद्यः प्रत्युवाच ।  
 यत् किं चकर्थ कस्तच्चचारेतीतिह परोक्षमव्रत मनुनिर्दिदेशेति । तान्हो  
 वाचाविदुषो उपावादिप्माप वो न्हुमह इति पिता वै तत्पुत्रानुपावादीदिति  
 हैनमुचुः पापीयसी ते प्रजा भविष्यतीति तथा हैवास ततो हवा एतत्  
 पञ्चालेषु गन्धर्वायणा वालेया आग्निवेश्या पापायिता इव महाकुलं ह तत्पुरा  
 वभूव । स यो ब्रात्यमुपवदेदेवमेवैनमुपवदेदथ यो ब्रात्योऽलं प्रतिवचनाय  
 स्यादेवमेवैनं प्रतिब्रूयात् ।

Upaditi Gaupālayana Vaiāghrapadya appears from this text itself to have been *sthapati* of the Vrātyā priestly caste of the Kuru country; and not *grhapati* of a whole kingdomful of peoples and castes as the Eka-Vrātya convert of the Vrātya Book was. The fact noticed in the Book (p. 174) that the title Vaiāghrapadya is later found invariably to be annexed to Brāhmaṇ names is quite in accord with the above view of the text. Though this may appear to be superfluous, I wish to guard against being understood to have suggested that because the Conversion Vrātyastoma was a group ceremony, it invariably meant the Aryanisation at one stroke of whole country-sides or none at all. The former would necessarily be an exceptional occurrence which would be brought about only by very exceptional circumstances.



## (b) The Lātyāyana Vrātyastoma Texts.

Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.9 :

विषथश्च फलकास्तीर्ण इति प्राच्यरथो नास्तीर्णो विषथः ।

cf. Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.16.

Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.10 :

कम्प्रमिश्राभ्यामश्वाश्चतराभ्यां युक्तः स्यादिति शाण्डिल्यः ।

cf. Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.17.

Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.11 :

याभ्याम् काम्याञ्चाभ्यामश्चतराभ्यां वेति धानज्यः ।

Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.27 :

ते स्यस्त्रिंशत् ऋत्विग्भोदद्युः ।

cf. Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.27-28.

Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.28 :

ब्रात्येभ्यो ब्रात्यधनानि ये ब्रात्यचर्याया अविरता स्युर्ब्रह्मन्धवे वा मागधदेशीयाय यस्मा एतद्दति तस्मिन्नेव मृजा यन्तीति ह्याह ।

cf. Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.22-26.

Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.29 :

ब्रात्यस्तोमैरिष्टा त्रैविद्यवृत्तिं समातिष्ठेयुः ।

contr. Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.29-30.

As noticed in the Book (P. 6), Lātyāyana concentrates on the Conversion *Vrātyastoma*, the non-conversion varieties being barely touched upon, and only for an incidental remark on a matter which might just as well have been omitted. The reader, if he is curious may look up the references for himself (Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.3-4).

The *dakṣiṇā* of 33 cows required in PB XVII 1.17 to be brought to the *grhapatī* is omitted in the Baudhāyana account of the Conversion *Vrātyastoma*, but is duly provided

for in the account which follows of the नृशंसनिन्दित *Vrātyastoma* for fallen Aryan reprobates. I have suggested in the Book (pp. 9 and 11) that the Conversion *Vrātyastoma* was by origin an adaptation of the नृशंसनिन्दित *stoma*, and the *dakṣiṇā* provision was undoubtedly there in the latter when this happened. But as Brāhmaṇ *rtvijas* would not officiate at the converts' ceremony the *dakṣiṇā* had to go to the *Vrātya gṛhapati* who took (as the Baudhāyana text states with perfect clarity) entire responsibility for the conduct of the proceeding. The Baudhāyana text having however (as I have stated) unnecessarily introduced the *Māgadha*, the *Puṁśchalū*, the *Jara'kadhratha* and the *Vrātyadhana* into this *stoma* was forced by the very logic of the situation thus created to provide that at the division of the *dakṣiṇā* the *Vrātyadhana*s (such as they were) were to go to one or other of these creatures, the cows only, the *dakṣiṇā* proper, going to the *rtvijas* ! Lātyāyana, however, though he was dealing only with the Conversion *Vrātyastoma*, had no scruples about the Brāhmaṇ *rtvijas* obtruding themselves into even this *stoma* for appropriating the cows, the *Vrātyadhana*s with their vicious burden of sins being very prudently diverted at the same time (according to precedent previously set in the Baudhāyana Sūtra) to a different order of recipients, namely, either *Vrātyas* still continuing in the unregenerate state or to inferior so-called Brāhmans like the *Māgadhas*.

Dr. Caland commenting on PB XVII 1. 16-17 has remarked that the thirty-three cows too must go to the taker of the *Vrātyadhana*. Was he really assuming that Brāhmaṇs officiated and it was they who took both the cows and the equipments (with, of course, the sins of the converts' past heretic state, with which the latter had been expressly "charged" by the PB)? This seems likely, since he appears also to have been of opinion that a

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*gr̥hapati* was quite uncalled for at a ceremony which was not a *sattrā*. Such a view however is scarcely borne out by the texts of the Brāhmaṇa, which in my opinion mean just what they say, namely, that the cows went to the *gr̥hapati*, there being no other *ṛtvijas* concerned in the ceremony, the *Vrātyadhana* being equally obviously meant to be given away at the end of the ceremony to whosoever would care to take them, it being understood that the receiver would be taking over at the same time the sins of the converts' past heretical condition.

If the Lātyāyana Sūtra in question could by any means be supposed to have stood for contemporary ritual practice, it would certainly have marked a great advance in ideas ; for it would have shown that by his time the Brāhmaṇs had entirely got over their former fear of the taint of heresy pursuing *dakṣiṇās* issuing from utter heretics. The *dakṣiṇās* would still be brought to the Vrātyā *gr̥hapati* (it being so ordained in the Brāhmaṇa), though Brāhmaṇ *ṛtvijas* would now be actively and willingly participating as officiating priests, the result naturally being that the *gr̥hapati* after this change would be serving only as a convenient conduit-pipe to collect and pass on the *dakṣiṇās* and those only to the Brāhmaṇ *ṛtvijas* ! Since however the Lātyāyana Sūtras clearly demonstrate that neither the Sūtra-kāra nor the authorities cited by him (some of them very old ones) had any precise notion as to what some of the articles named in the Brāhmaṇa as the Vrātya's equipments stood for in actual life, the more reasonable inference to draw undoubtedly is that the Conversion *Vratyastoma* at any rate had long since become entirely obsolete (see p. 8 of the Book) ; and that the Sūtra-kāra had simply slipped into what would be a very natural error on his part through being called upon (apparently only as a literary duty) to write upon institutions which he no longer

was in a position adequately to visualise or comprehend. [The Lātyāyana Sūtra-kāra, nevertheless, I must add here, leaves on me the impression of having been a rather shrewd and observant person, much more so than the Baudhāyana Sūtra-kāra and those others that came after him].

(c) The Kātyāyana Vrātyastoma Texts.

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.3 :

ब्रात्यगणस्य ये सम्पादयेयु स्ते प्रथमेन यजेरन् ।

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.4 :

द्वितीयेन निन्दितानृशंसाः ।

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.5 :

तृतीयेन कनिष्ठाः ।

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.6 :

ज्येष्ठा श्रुतयेन ।

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.7 :

यो नृशंसतमः स्याद् द्रव्यवत्तमो वा ऽनूचानतमो वा तस्य गार्हपत्ये दीक्षेरन् ।

The text not only prescribes a *grhapati* as a *sine qua non* for *all* the *stomas* (which is absurd enough), for the *nṛśansa-nindita stoma* in particular it actually ordains the selection of the most reprobate amongst the excommunicate for this office ! Such noble height of scholasticism has to be seen only to strike the observer with dumb amazement. The text nonetheless is of value for showing not only that *Vrātyastomās* in any form had ceased to be practised at the date of the Sūtra-kāra, but that the very object and purpose of these *stomas* had been very nearly completely lost sight of.

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.16 :

फलकास्तीर्णो विषथः ।

Cf. Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.9.

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.17 :

अश्वाध्वतराभ्यां कम्प्राभ्यां युक्त स्यादित्येके ।

Cf. Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.10.

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.24 :

मागधदेशीयाय ब्रह्मवन्धवे दक्षिणाकाले ब्रात्यधनानि दद्युः ।

Cf. Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.28.

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.25 :

अविरतेभ्यो वा ब्रात्यचरणात् ।

Cf. Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.28.

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.26 :

तेष्वेव मृजाना यन्तीति श्रुतेः ।

Cf. Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.28.

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.27 :

त्रयस्त्रिंशत् त्रयस्त्रिंशत् दक्षिणा दद्युः ।

Cf. Lātyā. Śr. S. VIII 6.27.

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.28 :

द्विगुणा स्थपतिरित्येके ।

This last text would mean a great step forward if the text really represented anything that actually happened. The *grhapati*, according to it, is not (as Lātyāyana would apparently have him be) the passive conduit-pipe for transmitting the *dakṣiṇās* received from his Vratya following to Brāhmaṇ *ṛtvijas* now eagerly participating in the rite for those same *dakṣiṇās*, he has to give them on his own account, and not just the standard number prescribed only,



but double that number ! From the very highly paying business it must apparently have been originally, the office of the Vrātya *grhapati* was coming to be the reverse of profitable to its holder ! (Had this *lakṣiṇā* provision, copied and adapted from the other *stomas*, ever really had any indeed but a purely notional existence ? I, for my part, entirely doubt it). Luckily however for the *grhapati*, the Sūtra-kāra had only heard about it from somebody else, of whom no doubt again, as in his own case, the wish alone must be taken to have been the father to the thought. These very excesses of the Sūtra-kāras make it plain that so long at least as the Conversion *Vrātyāstoma* was in active operation, the Brāhmanas took no part in it as officiating priests; and that the ceremony had gone quite out of use when they were writing about it.

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.29 :

ब्राह्मस्तोमेनेष्ट्रा ब्राह्मभावाद्विरमेयुः ।

Kātyā. Śr. S. XXII 4.30 :

व्यवहार्या भवन्ति ।

Compare and contrast the last two texts (29 and 30) with the Lātyāyana Sūtra VIII 6. 29. Entirely creditable as an essay in generalisation (besides that they stress the secular motive which ऋद्धिकाम and स्वर्गकाम do not directly do), these two texts are as innocent of historical significance as the Lātyayana text is charged with it (*vide* Book, pp 6, 9-10).

Upon a consideration of the entire body of texts hitherto extracted, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the *Vrātyāstoma* ritual practices as embodied in the PB texts never did have any of the developments outlined in the Sūtra Works above cited otherwise than upon paper only !

The Neo-Aryanism of Vrātyaland, it is clear, only needed to be given time to disseminate and spread itself over the country of the Redaction-Renascence (the Madhyadeśa) to deprive the Conversion *stoma* of any further *raison d'être* and reduce it to a dead letter; and as regards the other *stomas* the simpler Ātharvarṇic *prāyaścittas* would not take long to put them too out of commission, even if the innumerable caste groups now in existence should be supposed to have lacked potency for absorbing the waifs and strays from the higher caste groups (see p. 10 of the Book).

(d) Āpastamba Vrātyastoma Texts.

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 4 :

ब्रात्यानां प्रवासे ब्रात्यस्तोमा उक्थ्या रथंतरसामानः । द्वितीयो  
वाग्निष्टोमः ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 5 :

उष्णीषं प्रतोदो ज्याहोदो रथो विषथः फलकास्तीर्णो ऽध्वोऽध्वतरश्च युग्यौ  
कृष्णशंवासः कृष्णवलक्षे अजिने रजतो निष्कः ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 6 :

तद्गृहपतेः ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 6. 7 :

वलुकान्तानि दामतूषाणीतरेषाम् ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 8 :

द्वे द्वे दामनो भवतः । द्वे द्वे उपानहौ ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 9 :

द्विषं हितान्यजिनानि ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 10 :

त्रयस्त्रिंशता त्रयस्त्रिंशता गृहपतिमभिसमायन्ति ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 11 :

ता दक्षिणा भवन्ति ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 12 :

अपि वा षट् षष्टि गा वन्वीरन् ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 13 :

अथो खल्वाहुयदेवैषां सातं स्यात्तद्द्व्यस्तद्विघ्रात्यधनमिति ।

Āpast. Śr. S. XXII 5. 14 :

षट् षोडशी निन्दितानाम् द्वि षोडशी कनिष्ठानाम् । ऊर्द्धस्तोमो ज्येष्ठानाम् । चतुः षोडशी सर्वेषाम् ।

As pointed out in the Book (p. 66n), a new idea is introduced under cover of the words ब्रात्यानां प्रवासे which take the place of ब्रात्याम् प्रवसन्तः or ब्रात्याम् धावयन्तः of the Brāhmaṇa texts. The plural form ब्रात्यस्तोमाः which follows appears to suggest that the new idea was being held applicable to all four varieties of *stomas*. This of course would altogether obscure the whole classification scheme for historical examination, were one to miss the one outstanding fact which it establishes, namely, that the Āpastamba writer had discovered a new possible use for all these obsolete ceremonial forms, and it was the only one which could make them fit into the order of ideas which had become current in his day ; and this was that Indo-Aryans sojourning in a Vrātya country must make suitable expiations for departures from orthodox *ūchāras* necessarily involved in such sojourns. The idea authoritatively embodied apparently caught on and is still widely prevalent in the Hindu world of India.

The old familiar *Vrātyadhānas*, it should be noted, are conscientiously enumerated in these Āpastamba texts, though how these could still form the equipments of an Indo-Aryan of a later age who had been simply sojourning

in foreign parts, must pass all understanding. Scriptural writings of all ages and places have however invariably proved rather perverse material to writers of commentaries, luring them on as they must do, first, into inconsistencies, from inconsistencies to sophistries, from which the next step inevitably is to scepticism, and from scepticism finally on to criticism and free-thinking.

These *Vrātyadhānas* had in fact been so firmly nailed down to the *Vrātyastoma* rites by the PB texts quoted above, that they could not be taken apart by any commentator who had these PB texts in view. The Āpastamba writer adhered to the PB texts not only in this matter, he kept close to them also in not making these "equipments" go, as the Baudhāyana, Lātyāyana and Kātyāyana texts do, to *brahmaṇḍhus* (male or female, Māgadha, Sūta or Videha). The *lakṣiṇā*, he is afraid, may be doubled, but not in the case of the *gr̥hapati* only, as the Kātyāyana writer had heard. Lastly, as pointed out in the Book, p. 10, the *Vrātyastomas* of Āpastamba get wedged in between the वाचःस्तोमाः on the one side and the आदित्यानां प्रयत्ति and the अभिभू on the other (all ordinary *svargakāma* or prosperity-getting ceremonies) in the same *Kaṇḍikā*.

#### (e) The Śāṅkhāyana Vrātyastoma Texts.

Śāṅkhā. Śr. S. XIV 69. 1 and 2 :

ब्राह्म्यस्तोमाः। वसवोह स्वर्गकामास्तपस्तप्त्वे तान्यज्ञक्रतूनपश्यन्ब्राह्म्यस्तो-  
मान्। तैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गमापुः। तै स्वर्गकामोयजेत।

Śāṅkhā. Śr. S. XIV 72, 1 and 2 :

मित्रावरुणयो रश्मिनोर्वसूनां मरुतां साध्यानामाप्यानां विश्वसृजां भूतकृतां  
ज्येष्ठानां मध्यमानां कनिष्ठानां च। चतुर्दशस्तोमः।

As there are other kinds of rites interposed between § 69 and § 72, one would not know that the latter were *Vratyastomas* if one were not expressly so told by the commentator (Varadattasuta Ānartīya). Upon § 72, his commentary is : मित्रावरुणयो रश्मिनो ब्रात्यस्तोमः । वसूनां ब्रात्यस्तोमः । मरुतां ब्रात्यस्तोमः । साध्यानां ब्रात्यस्तोमः । आप्यानां ब्रात्यस्तोमः । विश्वसृजां ब्रात्यस्तोमः । भृतृतां ब्रात्यस्तोमः । ज्येष्ठानां ब्रात्यस्तोमः । मध्यमानां ब्रात्यस्तोमः । कनिष्ठानां ब्रात्यस्तोमः । एवमेते दशब्रात्यस्तोमाः । (Quite an enviable style of commentary writing, so far, if this were not followed by : ) प्रायश्चित्तार्थं प्रत्येकं कर्त्तव्याः ।

As within these ten (if they are correctly designated "*Vratyastomas*") is included the Basus' *Vratyastoma* dealt with in § 69, how is one to correlate this text and text 72, and the different objects assigned to the rites, by the Sūtra-kāra in § 69 (*svargakūma*) and by the commentator in § 72 (प्रायश्चित्तार्थं) ? The texts of § 71 deal with an उत्क्रान्तिरात्र rite of which the Sūtra goes on to say: इन्द्राविष्णवे स्वर्गकामौ तपस्तप्तुं यज्ञक्रतुमपश्यतामुत्क्रान्तिम् । This is the idea also of § 69 ; and I cannot but hold that the Sūtra-kāra meant to convey similar ideas by § 72. The rites dealt with in § 69 though expressly designated ब्रात्यस्तोमाः have obviously no Vratya implication at all of any kind. So whether these rites and the ones dealt with in § 72 were all called "*Vratyastomas*" or by any other like "proper name" could really be of no consequence whatever to anybody. But neither the ones nor the others were, it is clear, प्रायश्चित्त ceremonies, whatever the commentator may say about them. They all were *svargakūma* ceremonies; and the most natural explanation of the association of the names of the several gods mentioned in § 69-72 with the rites specified (by whatever name designated) is what I have offered in the Book (p. 93), namely, that by performing any one of them, the worshipper would be qualifying for admission into that part of the Vedic heavens which



specially constituted the "abode" of the god whose *stoma* it professed to be by name.

All these ceremonies not being *Vrātyastomas* in fact and reality (whatever distinguishing designations they might have gone by in the worlds of the *Sūtra-kāra* and his commentator), the commentator does not at any rate err when he observes, upon the rites of § 69, that any one of the three *varṇas* might perform them यः कश्चित्त्रे वर्णिको षिकारी। The designation "*Vrātyastoma*" is really a misnomer as applied to each and all of these ceremonies. All touch with the original "*Vrātya*" ideas had in fact got lost when the *Śāṅkhāyana Sūtras* came to be written, though the name "*Vrātyastoma*" somehow or other survived but only to be misapplied to some or all of these ceremonies, which had thus no relation whatever to, and still less were late developments of, the original *Vrātyastomas*.

### § 3. A Note on *Grhapati* (*Sthapati*).

Dr. Caland was inclined to regard the *grhapati* as an irrelevancy, in the Conversion *Vrātyastoma ekāha*. I have, on the other hand, found in this feature of it the keystone of the arch upon which a great part of my thesis has been made to rest. A few additional observations on the *grhapati* (and the *sthapati*, the two stand for practically the same figure in the *Vrātyastoma* ceremonies) will therefore. I hope, not be considered as thrown away.

The derivative meaning of the word "*grhapati*" of course is "the householder." But the *grhapati* who figures as the principal sacrificer at *vaiṣṇavīc sattras* is not a householder in the literal sense. When the original house-units had attained sufficient cohesion to give rise to other forms of associations, such for instance as a College of Priests, the *grhapati* idea had to be given an extended denotation

by including within it the principal figures or leaders of these non-family associations. These leaders were more like official representatives than householders, but they represented these non-family groups at *vaitānic* sacrifices just as completely as the householder represented the family at family ceremonies. The group representation idea underlay both positions, the groups being only differently constituted internally.

It should be clearly understood at this point that all ceremonies had not necessarily to be group ceremonies. There were ceremonies which concerned the individual as such, whether he was a member also or not of a family or a college. Most *kāmyeṣṭhi*, *prāyaścitta* and quite a variety of other ceremonies had no group significance whatever and did not need a *gṛhapati* at all.

So far, I have had in view cases where the sacrifices are being performed by the *gṛhapati* or the individual, as the case may be, directly; and not vicariously through the mediation of an officiating priest or priests.

When the Great Royal ceremonies are admitted into the *Vaitānic sattras*, many priests come to officiate at such ceremonies, led in all such cases by the *gṛhapati* of this group; and one thus sometimes finds the office of the *gṛhapati* at such ceremonies duplicated in the Books. We thus read of accounts of great Earthly Kings who, being translated into heaven, are seen stepping into the position of the *gṛhapati* of the gods at sessions of *yajñas* held by the latter, performed though they must have been and were through the mediation of *brahmarṣis* led by *Vṛhaspati* as their *gṛhapati* or *brahman* priest.

Every *Vaitānic sattrā* performed by colleges of *Brāhmaṇ* priests, whether for themselves or on behalf of others, would thus have at least one *gṛhapati*, the leading *Brāhmaṇ*

sacrificer and might (when the sacrifice was being held vicariously for others) have even two.

The Conversion *Vrātyastoma* text of the PB in the first place made a point of having the ceremony performed through a *gr̥hapati* because it was a group ceremony for *gaṇas*. Secondly, as in the case of the *Śyena Yajna* of the *Vrātinās*, it made a specific point of having the leading member of the *gaṇa* itself consecrated as the *gr̥hapati*, because no Brāhmaṇ would officiate at such ceremonies and there would be nobody to take up the *gr̥hapati*'s position even vicariously.

The use convertibly of the designations "*sthapati*" and "*gr̥hapati*" for the principal sacrificer in *Vrātyastoma* contexts makes the position even clearer. "*Sthapati*" was the appropriate designation of the leader of a group which was not literally a household. It was applied to a headman of a village, a governor, a caste-leader and so on. "*Sthapati*" would indeed be an apter term to hit off the leader of a *Vrātyagaṇa* than "*gr̥hapati*". Budha Soumya has been everywhere described as the *sthapati* of the *Daiva Vrātyas* (a non-descript crowd, like any human *Vrātyagaṇa*), and it appears from the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa texts that he was regarded (on account of his pre-eminence) as the *sthapati* of this group, even before he had occasion to lead them at the performance of the *stoma*.

So long as the non-Conversion *Vrātyastomas* had for their subject the initiation or re-initiation of individual Aryan-born backsliders from orthodox *ācāras*, a *gr̥hapati* or *sthapati* would strictly speaking be an utter irrelevancy at such ceremonies. But so soon as these ceremonies came to be assimilated with the common *svargakāma* rituals in which यः कश्चित् त्रेवर्णिकः was अधिकारी (so that the *Vrātyastoma* designation itself for these ceremonies became a

misnomer), it undoubtedly became possible for whole crowds of normal "*traivarnikas*", hankering for this or that *svarga*, to perform these and like ceremonies in groups of their own choosing, thereby creating the necessity for a *gṛhapati*, though here again ordinarily the presence of the leading Brāhman *ṛtvik* (there were sure to be a number of them in view of the plenitude of *dakṣiṇās* coming in) would render the further appointment of a dummy lay *gṛhapati* or *sthapati* a superfluity. Whether this ever happened in fact is more than I would be prepared to vouch for. Such study as I have been able to give to the *Frātyastoma* texts inclines me on the other hand to the opinion (several times expressed in the Book) that the Sūtrā Works' refinements upon the original *Frātyastoma* ritual texts (as they had been handed down to them in the Pañcha-vimśa Brāhmaṇa) were as a whole scholastic and notional only, and did not represent practices which actually came into vogue at any time either before or since. The Sūtra texts (with but rare exceptions already indicated) are seldom found to be reminiscent of the days that preceded the Brāhmaṇas.

I cannot conscientiously close this note on the *gṛhapati* idea without recalling the reader's attention to a text from the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa which I have used in the note under pages 64-65 of the Book. Dakṣa, I have there stated on the strength of this text, was induced to recognise Rudra (after the punishment he had received from Rudra) as *gṛhapati* and *Īsvara*. This is the only meaning that can be put on the text as it is found printed in the Calcutta (Baṅgbāsī) edition of the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa (Chap. 31 śloka 70) :

ज्ञात्वा गृहपतिं दक्षो ज्ञानानामीश्वरं प्रभुम् ।  
समस्तेनेह यज्ञेन सोऽयजद्देवतः सह ॥



The Vāyu Purāṇa version makes nonsense of the whole text by making “गृहपतिं दत्तः” in the *śloka* read “गृहपतिं दत्तं” and may confidently be dismissed as erroneous. But the Bombay edition of the Brahmanḍa Purāṇa (Chap. 13, śloka 76) makes the first line run :

ज्ञात्वा गृहपतिर्दत्तो यज्ञानामीश्वरं प्रभुम् ।

which not only makes sense, but better sense perhaps than the line as given in the Baṅgabāsi edition. Dakṣa performing all kinds of *yajñas* with this numerous Deva following behind him would be truly acting as the *grhapati* of the Devas at all these functions. The designation of *grhapati* would undoubtedly fit him more nearly than it would the “Lord of the *Yajñas*” who was the object of all this worship.

#### § 4. The Videgha-Māthava Legend of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.

Śatapatha B. 1. 4. 1. 10-17 :

घृताच्येति । विदेघो हमाथवो ऽग्निं वैश्वानरं मुखे वभार । तस्य गोतमो राहुगण ऋषिः पुरोहित आस । तस्मै ह स्मामन्त्र्यमाणो न प्रतिशृणोति नेन्मेऽग्निर्वैश्वानरो मुखान्निस्पद्याताइति ॥१०॥ तमृग्भिर्ह्वयितुं दध्रे (mantra spoken by Purohita omitted) ॥११॥ स न प्रतिशुश्राव (mantra spoken by Purohita omitted) ॥१२॥ स ह नैव प्रतिशुश्राव (mantra spoken by Purohita omitted) अथास्य घृतकीतविवाग्निर्वैश्वानरो मुखान् उज्ज्ज्वाल तं न शशाक धारयितुम् । सोऽस्य मुखान्निस्पेदे स इमां पृथिवीं प्रापादः ॥१३॥ तर्हि विदेघोमाथव आस सरस्वत्यां स तत एव प्राङ् दहन्नभीयाये मां पृथिवीं तं गोतमश्च राहुगणो विदेघश्च माथवः पश्चाद्दहन्तमन्वीयतुः स इमाः सर्वा नदी रतिददाह । सदानीरेत्युत्तरा द्विरेर्निधावति तां द्वैव नातिददाह । तां ह स्म तां पुरा ब्राह्मणा न तरन्त्यनतिदग्धाग्निना वैश्वानरेणेति ॥१४॥ तत एतर्हि । प्राचीनं बहवो ब्राह्मणा स्तद्धाक्षेत्रतरमिवास स्रावितरमिवास्वदितमग्निना वैश्वानरेणेति ॥१५॥ तदुहैतर्हि । क्षेत्रतरमिव



ब्राह्मणा उ हि नूनमेनद्यज्ञै र सिष्वदंत्सापि जघन्ये नैदाघे समिवैव कोपयति  
तावच्छीता नतिदग्धा ह्यग्निना वैश्वानरेण ।१६॥ स होवच विदेघो माथवाः  
काहं भवानीति । अत एव ते प्राचीनं भुवनमिति होवाच । सैषाप्येतर्हि  
कोसलविदेहानां मर्यादा तेहि माथवाः ।१७॥

The legend was introduced to illustrate the efficacy of a certain *mantra* formula for stirring up the power of Agni. It is unfortunate that exactly those portions of the story to which the narrator, for his own purposes, was attaching the greatest value have to be rejected as physically impossible. But the rest of the story has a genuine ring. It is the story of a whole Kṣatriya household, Brāhmaṇ priest and all (not, be it noted, a tribe or an army), trekking across (for them) a strange country which is seen to have already entertained an appreciable number of worshippers of the Vedic gods on to a country to which Videgha and his chaplain would apparently be the first to carry that worship. The legend, as I have stated in the Book (pp. 172-173), provides but the scantiest basis for supposing a sweeping mass-migration of Aryan peoples, lured thereto by their "longing for the beautiful tracts of Hindustan" (the country by the way where Māthava and the priest Rāhugaṇa settled was actually seen to be "marshy and very uncultivated"). Neither Videgha nor the Aryan Brāhmaṇs who preceded him are credited in the legend with having themselves brought any part of the country to the east of the Sarasvatī under cultivation. Videgha and the Brāhmaṇs moreover were the intellectuals of the *viś* and could not have done this themselves, even if they had wanted, besides that the Aryans as a people (as compared with the Eastern riverine Vṛātyas) were, as has been seen, rather sorry cultivators and reclaimers of unprepared soil. All that the legend as recounted was meant to convey was that it was owing entirely to the

power of the Brāhmins' prayers and sacrifices to Agni Vaiśvānara that the countries to the east of the Sarasvatī became blessed and bountiful. The story told was the story of a ritualistic miracle, not the casual narration of a successfully pursued country-wide agricultural operation. Of ruthless filibustering leading to political annexation, the legend gives no hint whatever.

The immigrants in Māthava's new "abode" are specifically designated "the Māthavas" and not the "Videhas" whom the Aryan settlers despise to the point of assigning to them a *varṇasaṅkara* origin of *pratiloma* parentage (Manu S. X 11). The legend establishes no connection whatever between Videgha Māthava and the ruling house of later days of the Kingdom of Videha, made famous for all times by everything that is implied in the great name of Janaka, the greatest of *brahmavid* Kings known to fame before Aśoka. [For references to contexts in which Janaka's name appears in the Book, see "Janaka" in the Index.]

[At p. 176 of the Book, I gave the Vṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad reference only to the Gārgya-Bālāki Ajātaśatru colloquy, the much fuller Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad reference having been accidentally omitted. The Kauṣītaki account of the incident describes Bālāki as a resident of the Uśīnara country who had, before he offered to instruct Ajātaśatru in the Upaniṣad Vedānta, travelled over the following specifically mentioned countries, namely, Matsya, Kuru-Pāñchāla and Kāśī-Videha, Ajātaśatru himself being of Kāśī. These were the countries of the Redaction-Renascence as I have shown from other material in the Book. Besides confirming that conclusion, the statement (Kauṣī. IV. 1) points at the same time to the generically Vṛātya affinities of the countries mentioned].

§ 5. Some Reflections on "Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization."

The excavations at Mohenjo-daro and Harappā have convinced Sir John Marshall of the existence between 3250 B. C. and 2750 B. C. at the former place, and for several centuries more at the latter, of a highly advanced city civilization presenting the same fundamental features as do the other riverine civilizations of the Chalcolithic Age in Egypt and Mesopotamia. This civilization, Sir John finds, disappeared under a deposit of sand and silt a thousand years before the advent into India of the nomadic Vedic Aryans with their village culture of a far more primitive type as compared with the one that had perished.

The two civilizations, he finds, stood at the two ends of the bronze and copper age, cut off in the manner stated from all possibility of direct contact, and must have been entirely unrelated genetically or by cultural contact of any kind.

Unless this ancient civilization should be supposed to have survived this general catastrophe somewhere in the Panjab, a thousand years' interval of time and several feet of clay and sand stood effectively between the two civilizations, barring all chances of inter-penetration.

The "*Dasyus*" whom the Vedic Aryans appear from the earlier R̥gveda *mantras* to have fought and absorbed in their new homes in the Panjab represented a still lower form of culture than the Vedic Aryans'. It is impossible to imagine that these people could be the inheritors of the departed Indus culture. That culture must have been as unknown to the *Dasyus* as to the Aryans themselves. The Vedic Aryan *mantras*, even after this *Dasyu* absorption, show no consciousness whatever of the existence of this A31.

older and superior culture and even of its very home, the delta of the Indus river.

The Vedic Aryans clearly did not meet any surviving representatives of this ancient culture in the Panjab for the simple and sufficient reason that none had in fact survived.

The artifacts exhumed at Mohenjo-daro and Harappā however exhibit elements of a religious life so remarkably like some of those to be found in the later Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas, the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas, a literature which grew up entirely on the soil of the basins of the Jamuna and the Ganges rivers, that Sir John Marshall has been led to hazard the guess that the Indus culture must have been the lineal progenitor of this later Hinduism, which flourished in the Eastern river valleys.

The assumption is entirely unwarranted. The literature which grew up in the Eastern river basins simply proves the existence in these regions of an indigenous local culture possessing nearly all the features of the Indus religion and others besides. That literature proves further that absorption into the fabric of the Vedic religion of these non-Aryan elements took place in these Eastern regions and not in the Panjab. The synthesis, I have demonstrated, was effected in Magadha in the first instance, to be carried westward later into the Madhyadeśa.

The following observations of Sir John Marshall are highly significant in this connection :

“That it (the Indus civilization) did not extend much beyond the land watered by the Indus and the Great Mīhrān and their tributaries is probable enough. Other civilizations of this age are mainly confined to the riverine valleys on which they arose ; and there is no reason to suppose that

the Indus civilization was an exception to this rule. Nevertheless, it is difficult to believe that while the Panjab and Sind were in possession of this highly advanced culture, the valleys of the Jamuna and the Ganges, of the Narbadda and the Tapti, could have been far behind them."

The evidence furnished by the later Vedas and post-Vedic literature in general is conclusive that the Eastern river basins possessed a culture which on many points was not only not behind but a good deal in advance of that disclosed by the artifacts exhumed in the Indus valley (if the script material, upon the contents of which it is premature to dogmatise, be for the present left, as it must be, out of consideration). Besides the Śiva-Durga cult in which it is possible to find implicit the Sāṅkhya Puruṣa-Prakṛti dualism, phallism so abhorrent to the Vedic Aryans, and stone and animal worship of a kind unknown to the Vedic Aryans, the Eastern culture has other elements centering round the doctrine of Karma-Vāda or the Transmigration of Souls after Death, the very keystone of the arch upon which the *Varṇāśramadharmā*, the Upaniṣad Vedānta, the Darśana and every form of Hindu and Buddhistic religious belief have rested. There is no reason indeed for supposing that the Eastern riverine culture lagged behind the culture of the Indus valley, if indeed it did not overpass it. The higher forms of philosophical and theological reasoning of indubitably non-Aryan origin entered into the Indo-Aryan scheme of life in the Jamuna and the Gangetic river basins.

It is by no means to be regretted that, whether from necessity or from choice, the Vedic Aryans had to turn their backs as completely as they did on this civilization of the Indus Valley, if thereby it was enabled to meet and mingle with a still superior culture farther East. The synthetic culture whereto Vedic Aryan elements and elements derived



from non-Aryan sources both contributed became all the richer for this historical accident. Such meagre archaeological evidence as has been found in the Eastern valleys (in Sir John Marshall's judgment) entirely supports this evidence from literature.

Against this is Professor Langdon's hypothesis that the Vedic Aryans got their Brāhmi script at any rate (the vehicle of their prolific literature of later days) from the Indus people. If they did, it is remarkable that there should not be archaeological remains of this script of any date between 2800 B.C. when this borrowing must, if at all, have taken place and the 4th century B.C. when this Brāhmi script is for the first time met with on some coins in Northern India and a century later in inscriptions of proved Māgadhic origin. Professor Langdon's theory of the derivation of the Brāhmi from the Indus script certainly stands upon extremely slender foundations. The script itself presumably had an Eastern Vṛātya origin.

The above considerations, I think, provide sufficient justification for my affirming that the provisional conclusions recorded by Sir John Marshall in the first volume of his Book, not only do not militate against mine, arrived at as they have been by following other clues and according to methods which are entirely different from his and his colleagues', but they go in material measures to corroborate and confirm those conclusions.

Having had their attention concentrated on the Indus valley, neither Sir John nor Professor Langdon could resist a natural bias. in favour of making the Punjab itself out as the meeting place of the two opposing cultures. Sir John's suggestion that the Indus culture survived at odd places till the Aryans came upon the scene flies right in the face of all data furnished by the ṚgVedic literature. Professor Langdon must on his part make the Vedic Aryans

autochthonous in the face not only of data furnished by that literature but against a consensus of scholarly opinion, that the Vedic Āryans were foreigners who descended into the plains of the Punjab from their highland homes in the Hindu Kushi and Irān. And every consideration, archaeological and anthropological, of reason and probability, appears to me to support the widely accepted view that the date of this descent cannot be pushed back beyond the second millennium B.C., and that it is likely to have been nearer 1500 than to 2000 B.C.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>85</sup> See A.C. Haddon's "The Races of Man and their Distribution" (1924), particularly at pp. 101 and 111; also the fine summary of the results of recent researches in the field in H. T. Fleure's "The Races of Mankind" (1927), particularly at pp 52-55, which are highly confirmatory of those arrived at by me.

## Post-Script

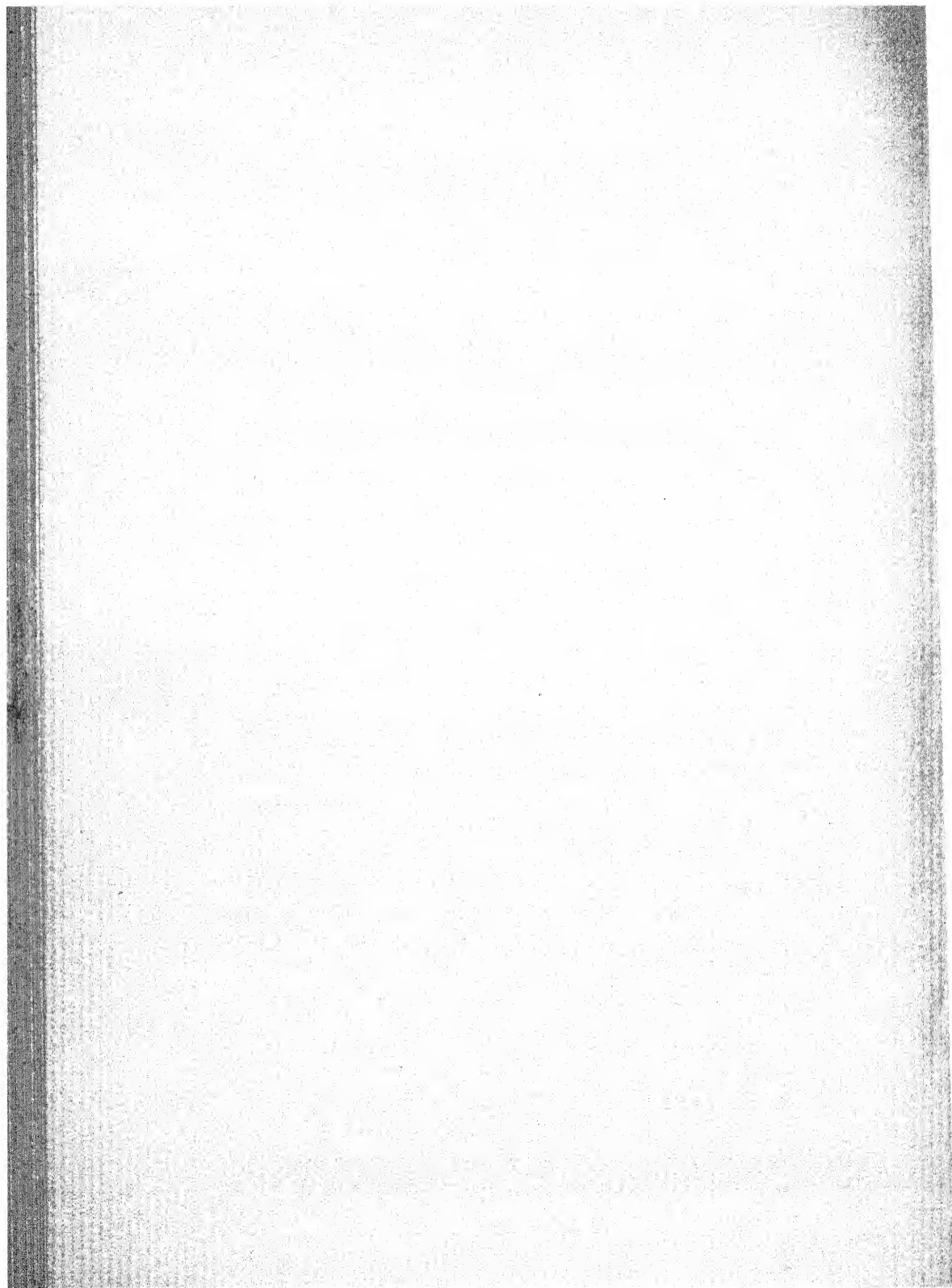
In the Census Report of India, 1931, Part I, Mr. J. H. Hutton of the Indian Civil Service has made a quite creditable attempt to collect and co-ordinate all the available data and speculations concerning the racial and cultural origin of the Hindus of Northern India. His final conclusion is so remarkably in agreement with mine that I cannot refrain from reproducing it in his own language.

At p. 457, he writes: "The early culture of the Mediterraneans and Armenoids in India may perhaps be most conveniently described as pre-Vedic Hinduism. Although this culture disappeared from the Indus Valley, it must have survived across the Jamna with sufficient vigour to reach to the Rig-Vedic Aryans whom it probably supplied with a script, and whose religious beliefs it ultimately submerged in its own philosophy".

Of the varieties of speculations discussed (the author adding some of his own) the one which has called for consideration by reason of its relation to a speculation of my own (p. 13n) is where, starting from cues supplied by Chanda, he modifies Hoernle's theory of a first and second wave of Indo-Aryan immigration (the Vedic-Aryan invasion of the Panjab being according to it the prior in point of time followed later by an Eastern migration across Chitral) and supposes that the Vedic Aryan invasion must have been of later date, having been preceded long ages back by an earlier invasion of the Indus Valley by an Alpine people from the Pamirs led by proto-Nordic chieftains who, he assumes, had succeeded in imposing on them a variety of their Aryan language, somewhat after the manner of

the Nordic rulers who appear to have imposed themselves and their Kharian tongue upon their Alpinic and Armenoid Mitanni subjects in Mesopotamia in the 3rd millennium B.C. This is the "Piśācha" language of which the invaders have left traces wherever they had gone in what is represented in Grierson's theory by the "outer band" of Indo-Aryan languages (pp 357-269, 450).

Not having had opportunities, previously to this, of studying the speculations of Hoernle, Grierson and Chanda, I had made a shot at it of my own in the foot-note aforesaid, which supposed the Eastern riverine Vṛātya Rājanyas to have entered India from the north, whence passing down the Gangetic Valleys they had (I suggested) imposed themselves and their variety of the Aryan tongue (the Piśācha) upon the people they settled amongst and ruled. In the absence of knowledge too of the Pamir clue, I supposed these invaders to have come across China. I concede the prior claim of the Pamirs. But whilst I have nothing decisive to set against Mr. Hutton's suppositions, I should just as soon be prepared to accept a modification of Hoernle's theory which would place the entry *via* Chitral of the "Piśācha"-speaking people as a very much earlier event than the invasion of the Panjab by the Vedic Aryans. I feel very pleased indeed, before my book has left the printers, to have had my attention drawn to Mr. Hutton's speculations by Prof. S. N. Bose to whom I have already expressed my obligations in the Preface.





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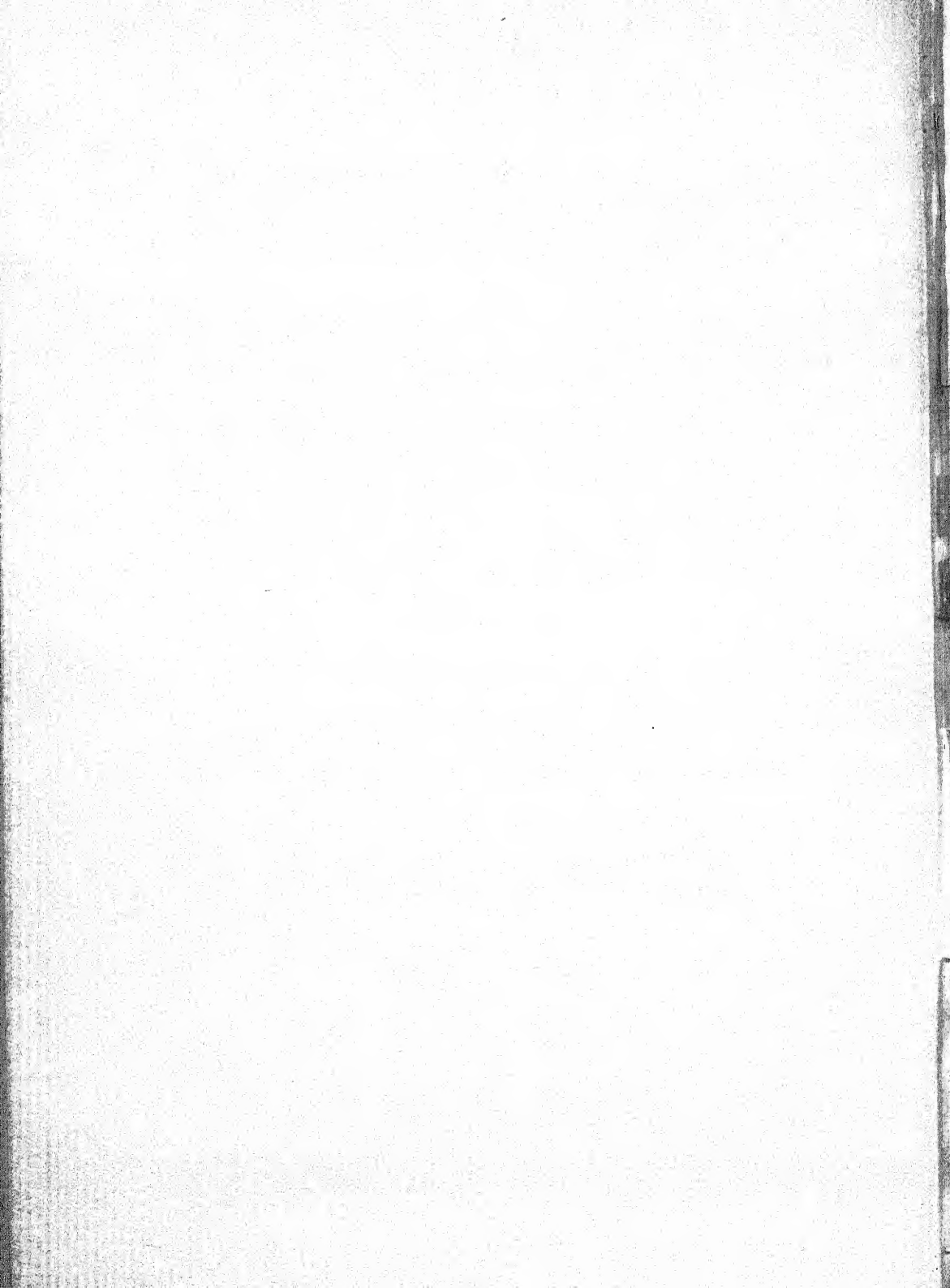
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| 15          | 11             | Lātyānana       | Lātyāyana       |
| 25          | 1              | देहात्मन्यं     | देहात्मन्यं     |
| 42          | 29             | Dichtuug        | Dichtung        |
| 52          | 20             | <i>brahmaid</i> | <i>brahmaid</i> |
| 66          | fn, ls. 5 & 6. | इजिरे           | ईजिरे           |
| 82          | 15             | Patheon         | Pantheon        |
| 91          | fn., l. 5.     | दीक्षेण         | दीक्षेन्        |
| 102         | fn., l. 9.     | आय              | आर्य            |
| 115         | 5              | ater            | after           |
| 142         | 9              | appearence      | appearance      |
| 143         | 13             | syetem          | system          |
| „           | 31             | <i>summun</i>   | <i>summun</i>   |
| 144         | 22             | benifit         | benefit         |
| 145         | 7              | disnguishes     | distinguishes   |
| 149         | 17             | intigue         | intrigue        |
| 150         | 22             | his             | this            |
| 164         | fn., l. 6.     | कर्मसुः         | कर्मसु          |
| 168         | 16             | ब्राह्मसंस्थः   | (ब्राह्मसंस्थ   |
| „           | 18             | <i>omit</i>     | by              |
| 169         | 3              | lhe             | the             |
| 201         | 11             | watchig         | watching        |
| 204         | 13             | succeed         | succeeded       |
| „           | 30             | everything      | everything      |